TRIBAL MYTHS OF ORISSA

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IN THE PRESS

The Religion of an Indian Tribe

Passage, O soul, to India!
Eclaircise the myths Asiatic—the primitive fables.

Not you alone, proud truths of the world!
Nor you alone, ye facts of modern science!
But myths and fables of eld—Asia's, Africa's fables!
The far-darting beams of the spirit!—the unloos'd dreams!
The deep diving bibles and legends;
The daring plots of the poets—the elder religions;
—O you temples fairer than lilies, pour'd over by the rising sun!
O you fables, spurning the known, eluding the hold of the known, mounting to heaven!
You lofty and dazzling towers, pinnacled, red as roses, burnish'd with gold!
Towers of fables immortal, fashion'd from mortal dreams!
You too I welcome, and fully, the same as the rest;
You too with joy I sing.

Passage to India!
Lo, soul! seest thou not God's purpose from the first?

WALT WHITMAN

SPECIMENS OF

THE ORAL LITERATURE OF MIDDLE INDIA

TRIBAL MYTHS OF ORISSA

VERRIER ELWIN

M.A., D.Sc. (Oxon)

Fellow of the Asiatic Society; Fellow of the National Institute of Sciences of India; Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute; Foreign Fellow of the American Anthropological Association; Hon. Member of the Bihar Research Society; Membre d'Honneur de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient.

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TO

MARIA SOPHIA PATEL

PREFACE

This book contains nearly a thousand stories collected in the tribal areas of Orissa. They have been arranged in the same way as the rather similar stories in my *Myths of Middle India,* by subjects, a plan which has the advantage of emphasizing the relation of the myths to every possible detail of tribal life. I had considered an alternative arrangement, by which the stories would be grouped according to their origin, but I decided against this because, although the Kond and Saora stories are sufficiently distinctive, many of the others show little trace of the particular tribe from which they came. Except in a few instances, the Gadaba stories might just as well be Parenga, or—with the change of a few names—the Koya stories might be Didayi. Moreover, while it will be comparatively easy, as it is, for the reader who is specially interested in, say, Saora mythology to go through the book reading only the Saora stories (there are catalogues in the appropriate sections of the Introduction), it would have been—on the other arrangement—less convenient to pick out all the tales connected with, for example, the origin of death or the discovery of tobacco. And where variants exist, they can be found—on this arrangement—side by side.

It has not been easy to decide how much explanatory and critical apparatus should be provided. It would have been possible to have doubled the size of the book if I had given all the notes which the stories deserve and perhaps require. A book of this kind, like a medieval cathedral, is never finished; I could go on working at it for years. But I am a field-worker and I think it is more important for me to collect new material from the sources which are now so rapidly disappearing, than to spend my time on comment which I may leave to others or my own old age. This book should be regarded, not only as a successor to *Myths of Middle India,* but as in some ways a supplement. The two volumes should be studied together. Each contains a Motif-Index which supports the other; the first has elaborate essays on many aspects of the folk-lore. In this book I have given brief accounts of the tribes from which the myths have been recorded and I have tried to discover the special qualities of the mythology of each tribe. In every case, I have

given references for further reading which the serious student will do well to follow.

These stories were collected during long tours and residence in the field during the ten years 1941 to 1951. The narrators spoke a number of different languages and dialects, and the use of interpreters was inevitable in certain cases. I was fortunate in finding admirable assistants for Saora and Kui: Gandarbo and Saoripani were Doms who had lived all their lives among the Saoras; Dinabandhu had similarly spent his life among the Kuttia Konds. Interpreters for the Koya, Didayi and Gadaba villages were less distinctive, but they were adequate. The Bhattra, Bhuiya, Bondo, Jhoria, Juang, Parenga and Pengu stories were told in Oriya, for the narrators were all bilingual. The Binjhwar, Gond and Kamar tales were recited in a dialect of Hindi approximating to Chhattisgarhi.

My custom was to translate the stories on the spot, as they were narrated or interpreted to me. I have translated them literally, as if I was translating poetry: that is to say, I have inserted no new symbol or image, and I have tried to avoid words which, though neutral in themselves, carry associations alien to the tribal consciousness. I have never, of course, attempted to make the stories intelligible or attractive to my readers. This has meant, I am afraid, that many stories may seem tedious and matter-of-fact, but if this is a fault it is a fault on the right side, for the Orissa tribesmen are not really very good story-tellers. They are rather taciturn and plain.

Here I noticed a great difference from the great Baiga and Pardhan raconteurs whom I had known in central India. The speech of a man like Dani the Pardhan, who has been immortalized by Shamrao Hivale in his book on the tribe, is compact of poetry, wit and obscenity. Many Baigas could tell tales with such vividness of phrase and dialogue that the listeners sat enchanted. But the Saoras and Gadabas and Konds, on the whole, told their stories in a somewhat pedestrian manner.

The narrators were in the main elderly men, the headmen, priests and shamans of the village. In every case, I have given the name of the village, district and tribe for each story, but I have not added the name of the teller, though I naturally recorded it. I have omitted the names deliberately, for to include them would

suggest that the stories were known to, or were even the property of, individuals. This was nowhere the case. I did not discover any great story-teller in Orissa. In most cases, in fact, the myths were told by a group of persons, one man taking up the tale when another's memory failed him. The stories come from the village rather than from the individual, and this is what we might expect in tribal Orissa where communal life is still very strong and where there is a rather surprising absence of outstanding personalities.

In the Introduction I presently discuss the distribution of the myths, the occasions on which they are told, their relevance to social and ceremonial life, and the Hindu elements which may often be found in them. In the Notes I also discuss in detail a few special motifs which were not considered in the previous volume.

Shamrao Hivale gave me his friendship and inspiration for the whole decade during which this book was in preparation. Sundarlal Narmada Prasad, who speaks Oriya fluently and has some knowledge of Saora and Kui, was as always of incomparable assistance.

Professor Stith Thompson revised the Motif-Index, correcting the starred numbers into conformity with his own revised Index of folk-tale motifs: his interest and assistance has been a constant encouragement to me.

In the early period, I had the financial help of Merton College, for the latter I am indebted for a grant from the Leverhulme Foundation. But I could have done little throughout this period without the constant assistance of Bombay: the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, the J. R. D. Tata Trust and Mr J. P. Patel have been of the utmost help to me, and to them as to all who have so generously enabled me to continue my researches, I am sincerely grateful.

V. E.

Patangarh,
Mandla District, India
1 May 1952

ABBREVIATION

MMI = *Myths of Middle India* by Verrier Elwin (Bombay, 1949)

See also Book List on pp. 647-8.

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INTRODUCTION

'I am inclined', says Boas, 'to consider the folk-tale primarily and fundamentally as a work of primitive art.'[1] Long ago Tylor suggested that myth was primitive ethnology expressed in poetic form.[2] And in the opinion of a recent American writer, myth is 'motivated, not by subjective, wishful thinking, but rather by the quest for an understanding of the significance of nature and life. Hence, unlike fairy tales, myths are taken with "religious seriousness" either as historic fact or as mystic truth . . . Whereas fairy tales are held to be the expression of wishful thinking and personal gratification, myth at its best is to be regarded as a recognition of the drama of human existence. Its ultimate aim is not the wishful distortion of the world, but rather serious comprehension and envisagement of its fundamental nature. Myth is regarded as representing metaphorically a world-picture and insight into life generally and may, therefore, be considered as primitive philosophy or metaphysical thought.'[3] Myth, in fact, to quote Tylor again, is 'the history of its authors, not of its subjects'.

From this point of view, the stories in this book are of great importance, for they are the readiest way by which the rather inarticulate Orissa tribesman can tell us what he is thinking about the great problems of the origin and meaning of life. His mind always shrinks from the abstract and does not easily philosophize, and one can sense the relief with which the tribal theologian escapes from attempting to describe general ideas when he clothes them in concrete form.

It is perhaps in this way that the Orissa myths should, generally, be regarded. Myth has been defined in many ways and, according to the fashion of the day, its function has been stressed now in one manner, now in another. But myth is too wide and protean a thing to be adjusted to a policy, and we will do well to

[1] F. Boas, *Race, Language and Culture* (New York, 1948), p. 480.
[2] E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (London, 1873), pp. 317, 413.
[3] David Bidney, 'The Concept of Myth and the Problem of Psychocultural Evolution,' *American Anthropologist*, Vol. LII (1950), p. 17. Bidney is summarizing passages from S. K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key* (New York, 1948).

recognize that it may play different parts in different cultures, and may well fulfil very varied functions in the same culture.

Stress has been laid, for example, on the connexion of myth and ritual, and in some cases it is indeed evident that ritual grows out of myth and that myth inspires and vitalizes ritual. This happens also in Orissa, but rarely. The Saoras recite the story of Jemra Kittung and his wife at the Jammolpur rite of the bringing out and dedication of seed before sowing. This story not only describes how this rite originated and why it is performed, but stresses the importance of the shamans and the need for the scrupulous observance of religious duties. The Saoras also tell the tale of the great snake Ajorasum and his marriage with a human girl at the Ajorapur ceremony, performed to protect little children from the malice of the invisible serpents of the other world. The Konds recall old stories of human sacrifice, the origin of the custom and how it was brought to an end, whenever they now offer to the hungry Earth Goddess the unsatisfactory substitute of a buffalo. They have a dance in the course of which they shoot at one another with bows and arrows, and then they tell the story of the two divine brothers given at chapter XXVII, 4.

But normally, there is no special time for the recitation of myths or folk-tales. At any ceremony, a shaman may be inspired to tell a story, which may be suggested to him by the occasion, but may equally well have nothing to do with the matter in hand. And out of the great floating deposit of motifs, dancers may select one or more and introduce it into the songs that go with their dances. Where there are dormitories for boys and girls, older men often drop in and tell stories, which serve as a sort of passport for their presence in youthful company, and naturally enough when a party of people is sitting on guard over the crops, or during a pause in the interminable routine of a festival, stories are often told. But there is no rule about this, and on the whole the connexion of myth and ritual in Orissa is slight.

Another function of myth which has been often stressed is its place in vitalizing and maintaining tribal custom. This is true, however, of comparatively few of the stories recorded in this book. The most powerful of such 'functional' myths are those relating to dress and ornaments. The Juang leaf-dress, the Bondo woman's

shaven head, the Gadaba bustle and ear-rings have resisted all attempts at change because they are firmly established in the mythology. When the Juangs were forced to abandon their leaf-dress they suffered as great a psychological impoverishment as did the Baigas when they were forced to break the breast of Mother Earth with the plough and abandon their traditional habit of axe-cultivation.

After dress, perhaps food is the thing most often discussed in myths of this type. There are stories to explain why Saoras eat buffalo flesh and Bondos eat beef and why, on the other hand, Saora shamans do not eat beef, why Konds do not eat monkeys, why Saora women avoid pork. The eating of rats and crocodiles, the avoidance of horse-flesh, various methods of cooking and why the leavings of other people are taboo, are likewise the themes of a number of tales.

Other customs which are accounted for in the myths are those of burial and cremation; the Parenga rule to bury the placenta of a newly-born child in a secret place; the origin of the Guar funerary rite of the Saoras; the use of palm-wine and coconuts in sacrifice; the erection of monkey-scarecrows by Parengas and Saoras; the special honour given by the Juangs to fire; Kond sacrifices at the time of earthquake and eclipse; the use of blood and cooked food in sacrifice; the beginnings of marriage and religious dancing. A major obstacle to stopping the custom of axe-cultivation, so injurious to the forest, is the almost universal belief that it was God himself who taught mankind to do it.

An outstanding characteristic of the Orissa stories is their homely quality. They are built up on the simple events of every day, which catch the attention and stir the emotions of the hearers. Thus, in a very large number of cases, a story opens with a man and his wife, who are given familiar tribal names. Often the man is a Chief or a shaman. They have children and arrange their marriages. These marriages are usually as entirely irrelevant to the plot as they are necessary to the atmosphere of the tale. The boy who serves for his wife in his father-in-law's house is at once a romantic and slightly absurd figure; he often appears in the stories and never fails to quicken interest. The tribesmen love parties, and many tales are set in an atmosphere of feasting, at a wedding, funeral or Harvest Festival.

Hunting settings are very popular, for they combine the well-loved forest background with a sense of adventure. We constantly find peasants going to work in their fields or swiddens, and many incidents occur when wives carry the midday meal to their menfolk. And there is all the business of protecting the crops, collecting honey, fishing in mountain streams, digging for roots, gathering leaves for cups and plates—a hundred familiar chores which make the miraculous transformation or divine intervention all the more dramatic and exciting for its simple and ordinary background.

Boas has pointed out that European folk-lore creates 'the impression that the whole stories are units, that their cohesion is strong, and the whole complex very old. The analysis of American material, on the other hand, demonstrates that complex stories are new, that there is little cohesion between the component elements, and that the really old parts of tales are the incidents and a few simple plots.'[1] In this respect, the Orissa myths resemble the American. Complex stories are rare, and those we have generally appear to be borrowed. For example, the story of how the messengers of the God of Death were tricked with its series of motifs, is known to the Binjhwars of Sambalpur (Chapter XXIV, 1), to the Dhobas of Mandla and to the far distant Warlis of western India. So also some of the complex creation stories, which follow a general common pattern, are obviously borrowed. The genuine tribal tales are very simple, and often consist of a single motif, though in some cases independent motifs seem to be put together almost haphazardly.

The absence of moralizing fables should be noticed. This is particularly remarkable since the animal fable in Indian classical literature is almost always didactic. Equally striking is the absence of the clever fox or jackal as an actor in the tales.

To answer the question of how far individual tales are distributed would demand a special inquiry, which might well take several years if its findings were to be marked by any kind of exactitude. But we may note that there are several possible sources of diffusion. Nearly all the tribesmen, except perhaps

[1] Boas, op. cit., p. 403.

the wildest of the Kuttia Konds, attend bazaars where they meet Hindus of all kinds, officials, merchants and ascetics, and even a few Christians and Muslims. There is a lot of drinking on these occasions and a lot of talk. Then many of the younger men and women go for a time to the Tea Gardens of Assam, and there they come into contact with every sort of person from all parts of India. A few go to prison, and many more attend the courts as witnesses in civil or criminal cases. In most tribal villages there are one or two houses of non-tribesmen—Doms who act as watchmen, Gours who tend the cattle—and these bring in stories from the outside world.

And then the tribes have quite a lot to do with one another, especially in the Koraput District, where the so-called 'Poroja' groups are constantly in contact. The Bondos, for example, see a great deal of their Gadaba neighbours and occasionally intermarry with them. They raid Didayi villages and quarrel with them—and many tribal quarrels end with a drinking-party. They regard the Konds with grave suspicion as sorcerers, but they know a good deal about them, and sometimes consult their shamans. The Gadabas, in their turn, are in close touch with Parengas and Jhorias, as well as with Ronas, Paiks, Panos and members of other Hindu cultivating castes. Hindu craftsmen, blacksmiths, basket-makers, workers in silver and brass, serve the tribesmen, and in some areas Hindu liquor-vendors provide them with refreshment. The Kuttia Kond and Hill Saora communities are more homogeneous and exclusive; few of them are bilingual; and the Saoras at least have their own craftsmen, even their own potters.

In other areas, the tribes to the west—Binjhwars, Kamars, Seorinarayan Saoras—are in comparatively close contact with the rest of the population. The Gond tribes—the Gonds proper, Bhattras and Murias—share a common culture and have much to do with Hindu cultivators and craftsmen. The Koyas to the south are more isolated, and the fact is to be seen in the greater originality of their tales. The Bhuiyas and Juangs intermingle at every turn, but the Juangs do not mix very much with the Hindus.

We find, therefore, that certain types of story are fairly widely known. The Creation myths follow in the main a common pattern, and are ultimately based on Puranic tradition. Myths about

the Sun and Moon are similar all over tribal India. Theories about the eclipse are also constant, and the motif of the Moon tricking the Sun into eating his children (with the result that there are no stars by day) is universal.

The story of the girl who dies, unloved and frustrated, and who is reborn as something which all men desire—a tobacco-plant, is known to the Bondos, Konds, Juangs and Gadabas as well as to the Murias of Bastar, the Santals of Bihar and the Gonds of Mandla, and is probably distributed throughout the country. Its variant, that the girl is born as a scorpion to take revenge, is, however, apparently less common.

Common too are stories about the origin of palm trees from the hair or ornaments dropped by boys and girls while dancing. The discovery of liquor by a god or hero who sees birds drinking and follows their example, occurs in the mythology of many tribes, as do the sombre motifs of the Vagina Dentata and the Penis Elongatus, which have been fully studied in my *Myths of Middle India.*

Hindu motifs are already fairly common, and I notice these in the sections on the different tribal stories. But I will note here that in estimating the extent of Hindu influence we must not allow ourselves to be misled by language. Often enough a purely tribal character is given a Hindu name and thus gains a spurious theological respectability, even though in fact his character and adventures have nothing whatever in common with his namesake. For example, the Saoras have two heroes, whom they name Ramma and Bimma, obvious mispronunciations of Rama and Bhima. But they have so little to do with the splendid beings of the great epics—in some stories they are brothers, in others man and wife—that I have adopted the barbaric spelling to suggest the resemblance and yet to emphasize the distinction. On the other hand, the Rama, Lakshaman and Sita of the Bondo and Gadaba stories have obviously stepped straight out of the *Ramayana.* The Hindu god Mahadeo, who is becoming increasingly popular in tribal folk-lore, and Bhimsen as a rain god, are also generally in character.

The Orissa Tribes

The tribesmen, whose stories are recorded in this book, have a great deal in common. In their daily lives, in their economy and social organization, as well as in belief and practice, there is a very general similarity throughout the area. Where there are differences, these are often not connected with a difference in tribal allegiance but are due to environment, education and the influence of the all-prevailing Hinduism. A 'wild' Kond is much more like a 'wild' Didayi than a Kond of the north-western mountains is like a Kond of the plains round Russellkonda. There is, in fact, often a greater range of difference within a tribe than there is between one tribe and another.

Today all the tribesmen live in villages, but these vary enormously in size and character. The Kuttia Konds, who live almost entirely by axe-cultivation, build small camps which can easily be shifted, following the rotation of their clearings. Other Konds build large permanent settlements. But all Konds tend to plan their villages in two long rows of connected huts facing or surrounding a central space. The roofs are often low and the floors of the houses sink below the level of the ground. Saora villages, on the other hand, are built in streets which run in all possible directions, and are often built up a hillside, the houses being raised well above the ground. They are divided into quarters, generally occupied by members of a single extended family. Bondo villages spread over a large area, and the houses are in complete confusion: there are no regular streets, and no planning is apparent. Juang villages are more orderly, being plotted round a large central club or dormitory for the boys and men, and they often are surrounded by a wall. Gadaba, Jhoria and Parenga villages are very picturesque, often built in the shade of great trees, and each house has its garden-plot of tobacco or maize. The typical Gadaba house is a circular building attached to a rectangular one.

The dormitory-club, which has a great influence on the youth of a tribe, exists among the Bondos, Didayis, Gadabas, Konds and Murias, and in an elementary form among the Jhorias and Parengas. Curiously, however, it has never been known to the Saoras. Many villages also have a common meeting-place for the elders; sometimes this is of ceremonial importance, and the stone

seats of the Bondos, Gadabas, Didayis and other 'Poroja' tribes are the scene of sacrifices and are guarded by various taboos. There are no temples in the ordinary sense of the word, but little shrines are now made outside a village for the goddess of smallpox, and Saora villages are characterized by a large number of small shrines with umbrella-like thatched roofs for the ancestors and gods.

There is a regular village hierarchy, members of which play an important part in the myths. Every village has its Chief, who is its spokesman and general organizer; in some tribes, such as the Saoras, he has great authority; in others, as among the Bondos, he is usually a mere figurehead. He generally has one or more assistants to aid him in the tedious business of dealing with officials and collecting taxes. The official priest is another important personage; he conducts the main agricultural ceremonies and attends to the worship of the village gods. In some tribes, however, his position is overshadowed by the respect paid to the shamans. There are a great many of these, and since they are mediums, vitally in touch with the spirit world, their commands are of great significance. These mediums are often women, and the Saoras in particular have developed the institution of the shamanin to a high degree of dignity. The invidious office of village watchman is generally held by a member of the despised, yet indispensable, caste of Doms or Panos, who act as middlemen, money-lenders and advisers of the tribesmen.

The main business of the tribes is agriculture. This may be pursued on established fields on more or less level ground; it may be on terraces for wet rice-cultivation; and it may be on the steep slopes of hills, in swiddens where the forest is cut and fired. The Saoras practice all three types of cultivation simultaneously; only a very few, like the Kuttia Konds and some of the remoter Juangs, subsist entirely on axe-cultivation. It is very common for a peasant to have one or two fields where he cultivates rice in the ordinary way, and his forest-clearings where he grows pulses, millets and other crops. He will also have a small garden for maize, tobacco, cucumbers, gourds. The staple food is rice, millet and pulse; few of these tribesmen grow or use wheat.

There are few taboos on food. Where there are totemic

divisions, its members do not kill or eat the animal after which they are named. There is a general tendency to avoid milk and its products. The Saoras eat monkey-flesh, but the Konds do not. Most tribes enjoy rats. The main controversy is about beef. This is not a tribal taboo, for there can be no doubt that at one time all the tribesmen ate beef with gusto and a clear conscience. But the influence of Hinduism has induced some sections of some tribes to give it up, and this has become an important factor in dividing the tribes and creating new endogamous communities. The people are very fond of hunting, as is evident from the number of tales with a hunting background, and of fishing wherever there are streams.

These tribesmen are all patrilineal. Social organization varies in detail, but generally it can be said that each tribe is divided into a number of broad divisions which do not intermarry and that these are sub-divided into exogamous clans which do. The 'Poroja' tribes—Bondos, Didayis, Gadabas, Jhorias, Parengas, Pengus—have a double organization, a phratry which is totemic and a clan which takes its name from a village official. But the village still remains in many cases the most important exogamous unit, and although the system is breaking down, there is always a tendency to marry, where possible, someone from another village. The Hill Saoras are unique in having no clans or totems, and in marrying 'by the blood', their only exogamous unit being the extended family descended from a common male ancestor.

Tribal religion is given a varied appearance by the fact that gods and spirits are called by different names, but fundamentally it is everywhere the same. There is always some kind of Supreme Being, often of rather ambiguous character, who is important for legend rather than for ritual. Beneath him, but not subject to his control, is a vast body of lesser gods, who may well be called demons and furies, for they are in the main malignant, and are often only remembered when they bring tragedy on a home. There are nature gods—of the sun and moon, the sky and rain and wind—some of them borrowed from Hinduism. There is generally a Mother Earth, and many deities of individual villages, hills and forests. All the gods, except possibly the greatest, have to be propitiated by regular sacrifices, and all the tribes observe a ceremonial year which is closely connected with their agricultural

operations. Some offerings are made before sowing, others during the process of growth, and in most cases there are Harvest Festivals, when the new crops must be given to the gods before they are eaten by men. If offended or neglected, and sometimes out of sheer wantonness, the gods attack men with disease. Sickness, in fact, is nearly always due to the intervention of some spirit in the unseen world; ghosts and ancestors, as well as the gods, have the power of giving it to mortals. In such cases, the shaman is summoned; he divines the cause of the disaster and prescribes the remedy, which is usually an animal sacrifice made with offerings of grain and liquor.

There are ceremonies for all the important crises of life. At a birth much attention is paid to the disposal of the after-birth, and the myths contain some interesting placenta motifs. A girl's first menstruation is an important moment in her life, and the monthly bath at the end of her period (when she is believed to be specially subject to actual or miraculous impregnation) occurs in a number of tales.

The importance of marriage may be judged from the number of tales which begin by telling us just who is and who is not married in a family, and go on to describe the enormous trouble that the parents take to marry their children off. The ceremonies vary, not so much from tribe to tribe, but according to the degree of external influence to which the locality has been subjected. The traditional tribal marriage in Orissa consisted of little more than a series of ceremonial visits of bride and bridegroom to one another's homes, a large exchange of presents, a dance and feast, and among the Bondos and Murias a formal bedding of the married couple. Nowadays, a booth is sometimes made and a pole erected round which the bridal pair are made to perambulate seven times in Hindu fashion.

Marriages are usually arranged by the parents, but elopements are not uncommon, and the Bondos at least allow their children great freedom of choice. Parents who wish to keep their daughters at home encourage the institution of the 'serving-marriage', whereby a youth serves for his bride for two or more years, and generally settles down with her in his father-in-law's house.

The most important of the rites are connected with death, for the ghosts and ancestors are dangerous and importunate and

have to be humoured. The usual practice now is to cremate the corpse—except in the case of very small children and of those dying of certain diseases. The ashes and bones are often buried on the spot, and mediums try to ascertain the cause of death. On the third day there is generally a feast and offerings are made to the ghost. On the tenth day there are further rites, and in many cases these are considered sufficient to ensure the departed's admittance to the company of the ancestral dead. But the Saoras continue with two or more ceremonies, often at great expense; the Gadabas have a great feast, with the slaughter of buffaloes and planting of trees; the Bondos erect menhirs in an orgy of dancing, feasting and prophecy.

The eschatological picture is usually of an Under World presided over by a God of Death, who sends his messengers to call men when their time has come. Most of the tribes now believe in some kind of reincarnation, but not apparently for everybody. A man may be sent back to this earth in another form, as a punishment, to take revenge, or so that he can obtain compensation for satisfactions that were denied him during life.

The chief recreation of the people is dancing. The tribes vary greatly both in the form and the quality of their dancing, but all regard it as a serious business, and many of them confine their dances to ceremonial occasions. As we might expect, it is those which have the dormitory which have developed the dance to the highest degree of perfection. The Juangs have a wonderful animal ballet; the Gadabas imitate all manner of domestic and agricultural operations; the Murias and Konds engage in intricate physical exercises; the Koyas share with the Marias a splendid marriage-dance at which they dress in headgear of bison-horns and peacock feathers.

There is a general similarity among the Orissa tribes, as there is among their stories. But the stories reveal their special pre-occupations. An obsession with sickness and death is clearly evident among the Saoras; the Konds still long for their human sacrifices; the love of the dance is apparent in the Gadaba and Jhoria tales. In the following sections I will give some brief facts about each of the tribes represented in this book, and make a few comments on the particular character of the mythology in each case.

The Bhattra Stories[1]

The Bhattras—the name is often spelt Bhottoda—form a prosperous group of agriculturalists settled in the north-west, and especially in the Nowrangpur taluk, of Koraput District; they extend across the border into Bastar, where there are about forty thousand of them. They have a tradition that they came, twenty-three generations ago, with the first Raja of Bastar from Warangal, and thence moved into Orissa. In the past they have usually been classed with the Gonds, and in their own story of origin the first Bhattra was the illegitimate son of a Gond and was brought up by Gonds—a suggestion that both racially and culturally they are connected with the larger tribe. Neither in Bastar nor in Orissa, however, do they speak any tribal language, but use instead a corrupt form of Oriya. They have in fact almost achieved the position of a Hindu caste of some respectability, and many of them wear the sacred thread and have adopted Hindu customs. In Orissa they are divided into the Bodo or 'great' group which does not intermarry with the Sano or 'small' group; they are further divided into exogamous and totemic clans. They are excellent cultivators and are very fond of hunting, though opportunities for this sport are steadily decreasing.

The Bhattra stories are like the people themselves—serviceable but not exciting. The chief actor is Mahaprabhu, who divides men into castes and races, works in iron on earth, and gives the weaver his loom. There is also reference to a special Bhattra god called Baman Dei, whose name reveals his Hindu character, and who also teaches crafts to mankind: he shows the first blacksmith how to work, giving him gold, silver and bronze tools. The personified Moon appears as a rather dubious character, stealing maize from a Bhattra's garden, and she loses her temper with the Sun and tricks him.

There is no tribal hero, and there are an unusually large number of transformations without any divine interference. A boy sticks an ear of wheat on his upper lip, and it becomes a

[1] Bhattra stories will be found at chs. I, 21; III, 1; IV, 1; IX, 1, 19, 31, 43, 51, 83, 89; X, 1; XIV, 1, 63, 69, 70, 74; XV, 17; XVI, 3; XVIII, 100; XIX, 1; XX, 1, 2, 3; XXII, 1, 2; XXV, 1; XXIX, 1; XXXII, 1; XXXIV, 1.

moustache of its own accord. A girl breaks the knobs from a hearth, hides them beneath her cloth, and they stick to her body as breasts. A man's gold ornament turns into a lotus; a Raja, escaping from an ogre, pulls out his teeth and sticks them as foot-rests in the trunk of a tree—they automatically turn into thorns. Beans grow from a woman's amputated finger; a pile of grain turns into a swarm of white ants. Although the origin of mosquitoes is associated with Mahaprabhu, he does not make them himself. As he works in the forge, black smuts fly into the air and are transformed. A man loses his pipe, and it is changed into a scorpion whose bite burns like fire. At a wedding a ball of yarn becomes a spider. An old woman's curse infects thieves with leprosy.[1]

The Binjhwar Stories[2]

The Binjhwar is a fairly large tribe, now approaching the hundred thousand mark, originally derived from the Baigas, but now independent and rather sophisticated. Many Binjhwars are prosperous land-owners, others have a good position as village priests. The stories given here were collected in the Sambalpur District, the most westerly part of Orissa, formerly part of the Central Provinces (Madhya Pradesh). The area, which has the appearance of a great park, consists mainly of a well-cultivated undulating plain, diversified by ranges of hills, and watered by a great number of artificial tanks. It leads on its western boundary into Raipur District, where other Binjhwars live. Some of the Raipur stories are printed in *Myths of Middle India.*

The Binjhwars are comparatively advanced in education, and though their stories were all recorded from pre-literates, they reflect the prevailing climate of Hindu village society and the open country of the plains. There are tales about Rajas, Sonar goldsmiths and Teli oilmen. The chief agent is Bhagavan, but

[1] References; Bell, pp. 78f; Grigson, p. 38; Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. II, pp. 271-7. A few Bhattra songs are given in Elwin, *Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh,* pp. 211-13.

[2] Binjhwar stories will be found at chs. I, 1, 26; III, 3, 4, 5, 6; V, 1; VII, 1; VIII, 1; IX, 2, 24; X, 2, 3; XII, 1; XIII, 5; XIV, 52; XV, 18, XVII, 33; XXIV, 1; XXX, 2; XXXI, 1; XXXIII, 1. Other Binjhwar stories, mostly from the neighbouring Raipur District, will be found in MMI, ch. III, 7; IV, 4; V, 5; IX, 6; X, 11, 20; XI, 10, 27; XXIII, 2.

Mahadeo and Mahaprabhu are also named, as well as Bal and Sugriv. There is the characteristically modern notion of a council of gods, possibly borrowed from the District Council. In one story there is a Muni who does penance, shutting his eyes for twelve years. In another a sadhu, white with ash, holding a trident in his hand, teaches men the use of bamboo. There is an echo of the *Mahabharata* in the story of the death of Kichaka. Earthquakes are caused, as in popular Hindu tradition, by Nang Deo, the great cobra, shifting the world which she carries on her head. Thunder is the noise of the hoofs of Indra's horse as it dances in the sky.

The common explanation of why the stars do not shine by day gets a new turn among the Binjhwars in the motif that the Sun's children become ghosts and every now and then come to kidnap their mother the Moon and so cause an eclipse.

The Binjhwars have a story very similar to one told by the Dhobas (a tribe closely connected with the Baigas), but also known to the Warlis, far distant in Bombay, about the origin of death.[1] In spite of minor differences, these tales obviously have a common ancestor which I have been unable to trace.

I have not recorded any Binjhwar myth of their own origin, but Russell and Hira Lal give several traditions which were current in what is now Orissa, forty years ago. The original ancestors of the tribe were the Twelve Archer Brothers, who were the sons of the goddess Vindhyabasini—the Binjhwars themselves derive their name from the Vindhyan Hills. One day when they were out hunting, the brothers shot their arrows into the door of the great temple at Puri. Nobody there was able to pull the arrows out, not even the King's elephants which were harnessed to them. But when the brothers came they drew them forth easily with their hands. The King was so pleased that he gave them several estates which their descendants now hold. The Binjhwars have the arrow as their tribal symbol; they brand their cattle with it, and illiterate Binjhwars sign it in place of their names. If a husband cannot be found for a girl, she is sometimes married to an arrow.[2]

[1] See ch. XXIV, 1 and MMI, pp. 412 and 418f.

[2] References: Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. II, pp. 329-36. For the Binjhwar Baigas, see Elwin, *The Baiga, passim*.

The Bondo Stories[1]

The Bondos are a small and distinctive tribe of about 3,000 persons living in the hills which separate the Dudma Falls from the Malkangiri plain in Koraput District. Their country is elevated, beautiful and remote; they themselves are notorious for their violent and inhospitable ways; and the result is that they have preserved a way of life which is strikingly different from that of their neighbours. The visitor is immediately struck by the extraordinary attire of the Bondo women, who shave their heads, cover themselves with a great mass of ornaments, and wear only the smallest possible strip of cloth about their loins. This cloth is prepared from fibre extracted from the deciduous shrub, *Calotropis gigantea,* and the women themselves weave it into cloth on small tension-looms: the practice is established in their mythology, which connects it with the forest-exile of Rama and Sita.

The Bondos have preserved an elaborate megalithic culture. Every village has one or more stone platforms, at the chief of which sacrifice is offered and social deliberations held. Across the summits of passes dividing villages from one another are long stone walls, which also have a religious purpose. Menhirs are sometimes offered for the dead at extravagant funerary rites.

There are dormitories for both boys and girls, but the girls' dormitory, which at one time was in a pit underground, is the more important. At certain seasons groups of boys regularly visit the girls' dormitories in search of wives, but the atmosphere is very different from that of the Muria ghotul's, for pre-marital intimacy is comparatively rare. The tribe is organized on a strict system of territorial exogamy, though it is also divided into moieties and sub-clans. Boys and girls are allowed great freedom of choice within the recognized limits, and Bondo marriage is, as a result, fairly stable.

[1] Bondo stories will be found at chs. I, 2; II, 1; III, 28, 29; IV, 2; V, 2; VI, 1, 2; VIII, 2; IX, 90; X 4; XI, 1, 2, 3; XII, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 33; XIII, 1; XIV, 71, 75; XV, 19; XVI, 5, 18, 23; XVII, 1, 26; XVIII, 2, 24, 25, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 50, 51, 75, 82, 83, 84, 103, 104, 108 109 110; XIX 3; XX 4; XXI, 1, 5; XXIV, 2; XXV, 2; XXVII, 1; XXIX, 2, 3; XXX, 3; XXXI, 2; XXXIV, 2. Other Bondo stories are printed in MMI, chs. I, 8, 9; II, 14; XVI, 62, 79; XIV, 3; XVI, 2, 3; XVIII, 14, 15; XIX, 7; and many others in my *Bondo Highlander*.

The majority of the 'functional' Bondo myths, and there are a good many of them, are given in my *Bondo Highlander,* but some of them are repeated here, along with a number of others which have not been published previously. For so wild and distinctive a tribe, most of the Bondo stories are somewhat commonplace, and show a surprising degree of external influence. This may be due to the fact that many Bondos go to jail, and many others to the Tea Gardens of Assam; and though these experiences seem to have little influence on their way of life, they certainly affect their thought. The Bondos too are closely connected with the Gadabas, with whom they are friendly; with the Konds, whom they regard with suspicion as practitioners of sorcery; and with the Didayis.

The Bondo stories of creation, eclipse and origin of the stars are similar to those current among many other tribes. So are the conventional motifs of the crow as the servant of the Creator, and the means by which the first brother and sister were induced to marry. The unexpected Diyamoti story (ch. XI, 2) contains the widely-spread motif of the External Soul and concludes with a variant of the very common tale about the origin of tobacco.

The main actor in the Bondo stories is Mahaprabhu, who is the same as Singe-Arke, the Sun-Moon, the chief god of the Bondo pantheon. In many ways he is more like a tribal hero than a Supreme Being. We see him wandering over his fields, making and using a plough, living in a pit, digging for roots, fashioning a bow and arrows, getting drunk. He is married and afraid of his wife. He has an intrigue with the beautiful Diyamoti, murders her husband and finally kills her also. Coarse in language, rough with animals—he knocks out the cow's teeth and twists the dog's tail—he is a typical Bondo peasant. But he is a Bondo not only in his faults. He is kindly and affectionate, intensely interested in the world he has made and constantly touching it up, as it were, and interfering in its affairs.

The Bondos are a rough, cruel people, hot-tempered and given to murder, and their cruelty appears in many of their stories. A husband lets his wife climb a tree for honey, but decides she is a witch, removes the ladder by which she ascended and leaves her to starve to death. A little boy kills a woman by intercourse,

and is himself killed in revenge; a brother murders his sister; parents abandon their children in the forest. The people kill a fine boy on the advice of a rat. A girl, exhausted by the attentions of the boys in the dormitory, cuts off her breasts. There are two thoroughly sadistic stories about monkeys.

The absorption of the Bondos in wine and tobacco may be seen in the fact that there are five tales of the origin of the one and three of the origin of the other.[1]

The Didayi Stories[2]

This small tribe, consisting of less than 2,000 individuals, lives on both sides of the Machkund river along the boundary of Orissa and Madras. In the hills above their settlements are the Bondos, with whom they have constant feuds, and in their neighbourhood are colonies of Konds and Gadabas with whom they are on more amicable terms.

The Didayis are wild, remote and primitive; many of them practise shifting-cultivation and live in tiny villages which are often moved. Others occupy regular and permanent settlements, with sacred stone seats and dormitories, which are surrounded by gardens and cultivated fields. The Didayis are keen hunters and heavy drinkers. The cloth of their women resembles that used by the Parengas; one piece is worn as a skirt, another is tied across the shoulders. It is woven on small hand-looms from bark-fibre or cotton. Like the Bondos, the Didayis are divided into large totemistic divisions called *bonso*, and smaller subdivisions called *kunda*; the names of the divisions are largely the same as among the Bondos.

The chief character in the Didayi stories is Rumrok, who appears as both Creator and hero of the tribe. There are a few Hindu ideas; Indra is god of the sky; the eclipse legend is of the common Hindu type.

Rumrok plays the usual part of Creator and Transformer. He floods the earth with water, but preserves a Didayi boy and

[1] References: Bell, pp. 75ff; Elwin, *Bondo Highlander*; Fürer-Haimendorf, 'Megalithic Ritual', 'Avenues to Marriage', and *The Reddis*, pp. 8, 37, 49, 330-5; Thurston, Vol. VI, pp. 207ff.

[2] Didayi stories will be found at chs. I, 3, 27; II, 2; III, 30; IX, 8, 25, 32, 33, 91; X, 5, 6, 7; XI, 4; XIV, 8, 72, 76; XV, 1; XVI, 6, 24; XVIII, 14, 80, 101; XIX, 4; XXI, 12; XXII, 3; XXX, 4.

girl for the new race. He makes a new world and creates all living creatures. He teaches men to build houses, explains the use of bamboo, provides the hungry with grain. His touch turns a corpse into a crocodile, and a miserly potter into a hyena. He is remarkably willing to mutilate himself for the benefit of his creatures: he pulls out his own hair to make grass, breaks off one of his teeth and sows it to make a vine, cuts off his own little finger and turns it into a turmeric root.

The bitter rivalry between the Didayis and Bondos, which I describe in my *Bondo Highlander,* is reflected in the story (ch. IX, 32) of the war between the two tribes.[1]

The Gadaba Stories[2]

The Gadabas, a tribe some 33,000 strong, are distributed widely over the hills of southern Koraput; at one point they are closely in touch with the Bondos, at another with the Jhorias, at a third with the Hindu cultivating castes. The Parengas are probably to be classed as a group of Gadabas, and the Gadaba, Saora and Parenga languages are allied members of the Austro-asiatic family.

The most singular thing about the Gadabas is the attire of their women, to which reference is frequently made in the stories. The cloth is made from the bark-fibre of the shrub *Calotropis gigantea,* and the women themselves extract the fibre, spin the yarn, dye it and weave it on small tension-looms. Colours and patterns vary, but the general effect is charming and the cloth is durable. Many women also wear great brass rings in their ears, dress their hair in 'door-knocker' style and affect a bustle which gives them a slight but rather charming tipped-up appearance. This attire is established in a number of stories, which afford a good example of the power of myth, for otherwise bazar

[1] References: Bell, p. 76; Fürer-Haimendorf, *The Reddis,* pp. 328ff. Fürer-Haimendorf spells the name of the tribe 'Dire'.

[2] Gadaba stories will be found at chs. I, 22, 28, 29, 37; II, 3, 4, 5; III, 7; IV, 3, 4; V, 3; VII, 2, 3; VIII, 3; IX, 3, 9, 10, 11, 44, 45, 52, 61, 64, 72; X, 8, 9; XII, 34, 35; XIV, 9, 10, 24, 36, 42, 64, 65, 77, 78; XV, 2, 3, 4, 5, 20; XVI, 7, 25, 26; XVII, 12, 18, 27, 38; XVIII, 15, 16, 17, 40, 52, 77, 85, 93, 102, 111; XX, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; XXII, 4, 5, 6, 7; XXIII, 1, XXIV, 3; XXV, 3, 4, 5; XXVII, 2; XXVIII, 1, 2, 3, 4; XXIX, 4; XXX, 5, 6, 7; XXXI, 3, 4, 5; XXXII, 2, 3, 15; XXXIII, 2. Other Gadaba stories are printed in MMI, chs. I, 12, 13, 14, 15; II, 15; XII, 28, 33, 54, 97; XIV, 5; XV, 1; XIX, 10.

competition would long ago have banished this picturesque costume from the Indian scene.

Gadaba men, however, are undistinguished, and the general style of the tribe is plain and commonplace. The Gadabas have dormitories for their boys and girls, but these lack the organization and romance of the great Muria ghotuls. But the leader of the boys' dormitory is an important person in Gadaba social life.

The Gadabas observe memorial feasts for their dead, but only rarely nowadays. They have priests and shamans, but do not seem to pay very much attention to them. They also have shamanins, who are 'married' to tutelaries in the Under World by a ceremony outside the village which is known as the 'path-wedding'. Gadaba society is divided into phratries and clans, the first named after animals (who are vaguely regarded as totems), the second—in Bondo and Didayi fashion—after various village officials. The clan, however, is now the only real exogamous unit. Gadaba villages are charming, with their round-roofed houses, stone platforms sheltered by great trees, and thronged by happy laughing boys and girls. I personally found the people exceptionally friendly and pleasant, but Bell calls them 'sullen, shy and obstinate'. Doubtless they vary, as other people vary, from place to place and from time to time.

At one time the Gadabas were professional palanquin-bearers, but long ago they turned to agriculture as a means of livelihood. Their antipathy to the horse has been traced to the fact that at one time it must have been a business rival, the alternative means of transport in olden days. But this antipathy is shared by the Saoras and various other tribes, including the Baigas, who have never been palanquin-bearers, and I think it is possible that it is rather connected with the very common tradition of the two brothers, the younger of whom rode away on a horse to become a King, while the elder stayed on his feet to be a peasant. The tribesmen, of course, were never quick enough to mount a horse in time, and perhaps they have ever since resented the fact.

The Gadabas have no tribal hero, but his place is taken by the Twelve Gadaba brothers, an anonymous family, whose adventures are frequently described. Of divine beings the most active is Ispur Mahaprabhu, who is the Ispural of Bastar, and

whose name may be a corrupt form of the Hindu Iswar. Other gods are the wealthy Birkamdai, cannibal money-lender of the gods, Girgirimeta, the pig-toothed Simadai, the ubiquitous Bhimo, Kalanka Deota and his divine subordinates. A number of Hindu elements may be noted. The twelve Viskarma brothers who build a temple remind us of Viswakarma, the famous architect of the *Mahabharata* and the builder of the city of Lanka in the *Ramayana.* Iskindaban is the classical Kishkindhya, which has been identified with Mysore. Tarki is the demon Taraka of the *Ramayana,* who was killed by Rama. Indro Mahaprabhu, god of the sky, is Indra. Basmoti Mata is goddess of the earth. We also find the three Ganges Sisters who give grain to mankind.

Ispur Mahaprabhu creates and transforms like any other tribal god. But he is not described as creating things with the elaboration and detail that we find in Kond and Saora stories. In fact, as with the Bhattras, there is a rather large number of tales in which objects are transformed without any divine intervention at all. One broom turns into a peacock, another into a porcupine; chips of wood become frogs; a comb becomes a crab; castor seeds are transformed into bees or grasshoppers, a handful of chaff into a swarm of mosquitoes.

An unusual motif occurs in the story about the origin of leprosy. The disease originated among the gods and was communicated to mankind by the ghost of a god. A Pengu variant attributes the disease to the ghost of a human boy who was mutilated by his brothers.

The Gadaba tale of the origin of witchcraft occurs in slightly varying forms among the Baigas, Pardhans and Santals and is probably very widely distributed.[1]

The Gadabas have an unusual number of stories about other tribes. A Saora hunter appears in one tale, an adulterous Kond god in another, a Bondo in a third, a Parenga in a fourth. It is the Gadabas who tell the story of the origin of the Bondos, and explain why Bondo women wear so little cloth. It is the Gadabas, not the Konds themselves, who have the tale of the Kond corpse, the first Kond witch and the Kond god. Other tribes return the compliment, and Gadaba affairs are discussed

[1] See MMI, p. 443.

in Bondo, Jhoria and Parenga stories. A Konda Dora tale describes a sacrifice offered on the bustle of a Gadaba woman, a custom which may well exist, though I have been unable to verify it.

The Gadabas' interests are apparent in their myths. There are many stories about dancing, in which the Gadabas achieve a competence that is unrivalled in Orissa and which challenges the superbly intricate dancing of the Bastar Murias. Boys play games, and there are references to the dormitory. The dress of Gadaba women is frequently mentioned. We hear of the Gota Mela festival, and the path-wedding of a shamanin to her tutelary. And above all, Gadaba interest is focussed in the adventures of the ancestors of their tribe, the Twelve Gadaba Brothers, as they ranged in glorious freedom in the Iskindaban forest and along the banks of the Godaveri.[1]

The Gond and Muria Stories[2]

In 1941 there were over 312,000 Gonds (separate figures were not extracted for Murias) in Orissa, and of these nearly 25,000 were living in Koraput District. These Gonds are usually, at least in comparison with other tribesmen, comparatively 'civilized' and prosperous; they have a good social position and in their general way of life resemble the Bhattras. Indeed, according to one story of origin, the Murias were originally Bhattras.

The Koraput Gonds are divided into Raj Gonds, Dhur Gonds and Murias. They are concentrated mainly in the Nowrangpur Taluk, and are bilingual, speaking Gondi as well as Oriya or a Hindi dialect. They are careful and regular cultivators and have a reputation for temperance. They are good dancers, fond of ornamentation, and keen on hunting. Education has

[1] References: Bell, pp. 74-5; Fürer-Haimendorf, 'Megalithic Ritual', and see Index of *The Reddis*; Elwin, *The Muria and their Ghotul*, pp. 308-11; G. Ramadas, 'The Gadabas', *Man in India*, Vol. XI (1931), pp. 160-73; Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. III, pp. 9-14; Thurston, Vol. II, pp. 245-52. Dr. K. G. Izikowitz spent part of 1951-2 among the Gadabas, and made a careful study of their life and customs.

[2] Gond stories will be found at chs. VII, 5; IX, 73; X, 10, 11; XII, 8; XIV, 51; XVI, 1; XVII, 45; XVIII, 31, 67, 86, 87; XXIV, 4; XXV, 6; XXXI, 6; XXXII, 16; XXXIV, 3; XXXV, 1.

Muria stories are printed at chs. I, 18, 41; II, 10; III, 22; IV, 13; VII, 10, 11; IX, 58; XII, 21, 22, 23, 41, 42; XVIII, 60; XXV, 13.

made some progress among them, and on the whole they represent the best type of Gond character—that of substantial and respectable farmers, proud of their lands and family traditions.

The Orissa Murias resemble the Bastar Murias in their general social organization, their religious practices, and in their attachment to dancing and ornaments, but the most characteristic feature of their life in Bastar—the ghotul dormitory—has almost disappeared, as a result of misguided puritan reforms. I have included here a number of their stories about the origin of palm wine which were recorded in Bastar, so that they can be read side by side with the Orissa tales, many of which they resemble.

I was not able to obtain sufficient Gond stories to give any representative picture of the tribe's mythology. I did not discover any references to Lingo, the famous cult-hero of the Gonds and Murias elsewhere, and there are only a few mentions of the ancient Gond gods: Dongar Pen (a characteristic linguistic hybrid), however, appears, and so does Bara Pen, the 'great god', who is now often assimilated into the personality of Mahadeo.

There is a general sense of being in the plains and in the company of plainsmen: Bhattras, Ghasias, Sundis, Paiks and Gours figure as actors in the tales. This was the only tribe from which I recorded a story about the origin of lac insects, important for the manufacture of bangles.

The mysterious figures of Ol Raja and Ol Rani appear in two stories. These may be the King and Queen of the Or or Odra race, the original people of Orissa. But here they are poor little dwarfs, who try to push the sky up above the earth and are so exhausted by their efforts that they die.

The story (ch. IV, 13) of the ghosts who cook their food and the stars as their blazing hearths, is unusual, but may be compared to the Saora myth about the Kittungs who cook in the sky and make things too hot for human comfort.[1]

[1] References: Bell, pp. 76f.; Elwin, *The Muria and their Ghotul.* The Gond mythology of other areas has been studied by Fürer-Haimendorf in *The Raj Gonds of Adilabad;* Hivale, *The Pardhans of the Upper Narbada Valley;* Hislop, *Papers relating to the Aboriginal Tribes of the Central Provinces;* Trench, *Grammar of Gondi;* and there are many Gond and Muria stories in Elwin, *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal, Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh* and *Myths of Middle India.*

The Jhoria and Pengu Stories[1]

The Jhorias and Pengus are two sections of that large group of Orissa tribesmen whom it was once fashionable to call 'Poroja', and which included elements as diverse as the Bondos, Gadabas and Konds. Research is gradually extracting from this ethnological *bouillabaisse* the more distinctive tribes, and we now tend to discuss separately the Didayis and Bondos, the Gadabas, Parengas and Konds. We are left with what Bell probably rightly calls 'the Porojas proper', the Pengus and Jhorias, to whom he adds two groups of which I have no information, the Barengs and Sodabissias.

There is apparently little difference, as Bell says again, between the Jhorias, Pengus and Barengs; in some villages the only distinction is that one group indulges in the eating of beef, while another abstains from it. The Jhorias, in fact, are defined by Thurston as Porojas 'who eat beef and speak Oriya'. Very soon, under Hindu pressure, even this criterion will disappear.

In Bastar, says Hislop, the Marias 'are also called Jhorias, probably from *jhodi,* a brook'. Dalton says that the Marias 'are also called Jhoria, from *jhodi,* a brook. This is the name given to the gold-washers in Chutia Nagpur, who are in all probability Gonds likewise.' The Jhorias' own story of their origin, printed in the text, asserts that the first Jhoria was the child of a Mali woman, and was born in a stream. He was adopted by a Gadaba, and when people asked him his tribe, he could say nothing but '*Jhoria, jhoria,* stream, stream'. The Jhoria Murias of Bastar are an important group with a fully developed dormitory system and a megalithic culture. Like the Jhoria Murias, the Jhorias of Bastar have a dormitory system (now rapidly going out of fashion), a passion for dancing, and funerary rites associated with the erection of menhirs. They cremate their dead, and afterwards—like the Saoras—bury the ashes in a small pit. Among their gods is Jakar Deota, who is the same as the

[1] Jhoria stories will be found at chs. I, 38; III, 8; V, 4; VIII, 4; IX, 12, 74, 92; XII, 11, 36; XIII, 6; XIV, 11; XVI, 8, 9, 27; XVII, 19, 47; XVIII, 53, 54, 78, 88, 94, 105, 112, 113; XX, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; XXII, 8, 9; XXIV, 5; XXV, 7, 8; XXIX, 5; XXX, 8, 9; XXXII, 4; XXXIII, 3, 4. There are also two stories in MMI: XII, 36; XXI, 15.

Pengu stories will be found at chs. XIII, 11; XVI, 16; XVII, 15; XVIII, 63; XX, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44.

Earth Goddess, Bhumi Deota, and she is represented by a stone placed beneath a tree outside a village. Jhoria villages are not unlike other 'Poroja' permanent settlements and personally I always found both the people and their habitations remarkably attractive. There was nothing at all to distinguish Pengus and Jhorias.

In the Census Report for 1911, J. C. Molony says that the Jhorias are to be found 'in abundance' in the neighbourhood of Koraput and Jeypore. They have always, he says, 'been near the centre of such civilization as the country affords; and are an industrious agricultural population, not at present off the beaten track or concealed in the jungle'. Their women, he continues, 'have a distinctive dress, and a particularly neat one too. They wear white cloths, with a cerise or crimson border, neatly arranged in a fashion of their own so as to cover the upper part of the body and both shoulders completely. Their cloth is continuous and reaches to the knee. The women are of curiously short stature, but with wonderfully developed calves. The lower leg is frequently tattooed from the knee to the ankle, and so closely as to give the appearance almost of a stocking. Their dancing is the best I saw in the Agency, but the villages near Koraput have considerable practice, as they are always dancing as a show for European visitors.' Bell too is enthusiastic about the Jhorias, and refers to their girls as 'attractive little creatures' whose 'constant cheerful chatter' and 'high-pitched bursts of merriment' can always be heard while they are at work.

The Jhoria love of dancing is reflected in a number of stories. Maidens dance into the sky, and the Cloud-god is so delighted that he will not allow them to return to earth. In another tale, boys and girls dance with such exuberance that they fall senseless to the ground. The first Jhoria brothers, Deoguni and Nirguni, play on their flute and fiddle, and so sweet is the music that all the birds and beasts of the forest dance to it. An ogress joins them and so absorbed is she in the dance that the brothers are able to capture her and tie her up before she realizes what is happening. The dance is perhaps the fundamental element in Jhoria culture, for everything, the origin of the tribe, the phenomena of nature, the life of every day is interpreted as part of the dance rhythm.

There is nothing very remarkable about the Jhoria stories.

They might equally well have been told by Gadabas or Parengas, and in fact members of other tribes often occur as their heroes. In one of their tales, a Gadaba discovers salt, in another a Didayi discovers spirits. It is a Jhoria story which recounts the origin of the Gadabas and Parengas, and traces the tiger-striped Gadaba cloth to its mythological beginning.

The gods are the usual 'Poroja' gods of the Orissa countryside—Ispur Mahaprabhu, Bhima Deota, Dharmo Deota, Basmoti, and Dhuli Nagin; they all have Hindu qualities. Ispur, like the Koya Deur, does not obtrude himself and many transformations take place of their own accord. There is one story of a human sacrifice, offered to the Hindu goddess Thakurani.

It may be noticed that in contrast to the habit of other tribesmen, the Jhorias seldom give names to the human characters in their tales.[1]

The Juang Stories[2]

Only a few Juang stories are printed in this book; there are more in *Myths of Middle India*, and I have given a considerable number of 'functional' myths in my 'Notes on the Juang', published in *Man in India* some years ago. The Juangs differ from the other Orissa tribes and resemble the Baigas in vitalizing many of their social institutions, from the most important down to such trivialities as the use of tooth-twigs, by appropriate myths.

The Juangs are a small tribe, not very friendly to strangers and difficult of access. They were described by Dalton as 'in habits and customs the most primitive people I have met with

[1] References: Bell, pp. 71-4; Thurston, Vol. VI, pp. 207-22; J. C. Molony, *Census of India, 1911*, Vol. XII, Part I, p. 167.

[2] Juang stories will be found at chs. III, 9, 10; IV, 5; V, 5; VII, 6, 13; XII, 12, 13, 14: XXV, 9; XXVIII, 5.

Other Juang stories are given in MMI at chs. I, 18; IV, 12; VII, 16; XI, 30; XII, 8, 48, 68, 69, 70, 71, 81; XIV, 8, 11; XV, 5, 6; XVI, 5; XVIII, 18, 19; XIX, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. See also my 'Notes on the Juang', *Man in India*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 22 (the origin of Rajas), 23 (the Pig King), 25-30 (the origin of tribal sub-divisions), 40-2 (the origin of the leaf-dress), 50-2 (axe-cultivation), 57 (hunting), 75-6 (origin of the dormitory), 118-20 (the cult of the gods), 120-5 (creation of the world and mankind), 125-6 (origin of fire), 134 (witchcraft).

A few Bhuiya stories will be found at chs. III, 2; XII, 45; XVI, 4 and in MMI, chs. I, 2, 3; II, 1, 13; III, 22; VIII, 11; XII, 31; XVIII, 12; XIX, 3, 4, 5; XXII, 9; XXIII, 9.

or read of'. The Census of 1941 gave their numbers as 17,032, of whom 8,424 were living in what was then Keonjhar State, 7,520 in Dhenkanal and 375 in Pal Lahara. They live in close association with the Pauri Bhuiyas, a small but distinctive section of a great tribe, now numbering some two million, which is distributed all over east and central India. Juang traditions say that there were originally two brothers—the elder, the Bhuiya, became lord of the soil and received the kingdom; the younger, the Juang, had to serve.

The tribe is divided into a large number of exogamous clans, which trace their origin back to the twelve sons and twelve daughters of Rusi and Rusain, the parents of mankind. The Juangs worship a rather large number of gods, chief among them being Dharam Deota or Mahapurub, who is usually identified with the Sun, and Dharti Mata or Basuki who is Mother Earth. Dharam Deota figures frequently in the myths, where he appears as Creator of the world. Although he did not initiate the first human sacrifice himself, he was willing to use the blood and bones of the victim to make the earth steady. He put life into the first human images, and as he gave life, so he sent death into the world.

Rusi and his wife Rusain correspond to Nanga Baiga and Nanga Baigin of Baiga legend; they are semi-deified tribal heroes. Rusi establishes the natural order and sets human society on its course; he is a Transformer who makes birds and animals; and he is associated with the leaf-dress, axe-cultivation, the origin of fire, and the village dormitory. He and his wife are invoked to bless the marriage bed, to make the swidden fertile, to protect the traveller through the jungle, to guard the dormitory, to inspire the dancers.

The most striking features of traditional Juang life are the leaf-dress, the dormitory system and a remarkable dance which often takes the form of an animal ballet. Until comparatively recently, all Juang women had to dress in leaves, and when they were forced by a British official to abandon the custom, they believed that Sat (Truth or Virtue) had abandoned the tribe. In 1943 I found a few Juang women still wearing leaves habitually and all wearing them for special occasions such as a wedding or festival, but the practice has probably disappeared altogether by

now. Much of the Juangs' recreational and social life, as among the neighbouring Bhuiyas, centres round the dormitory, which is a school of dancing, an instrument of social service and the inspiration of such artistic creation as survives.

Although many of the Juang stories are strikingly original, they include a number of widely distributed motifs, such as those of the transformation of men into monkeys, of hair growing from the tongue, of the unwanted girl who returns to earth as a tobacco plant, of the Vagina Dentata, of the falling star as the spirit of someone who has been hanged, and of ornaments falling from the heads of dancers to become trees. Yet, on the whole, the atmosphere of the Juang stories is unusually bizarre and primitive. The creation legends seem to take one back to the very beginning of a formless world; there is a superb picture of the hero Rusi living in an ant-hill and coming out from time to time to drum on a grindstone, and of his meeting with an Asur cannibal whom he marries. And the Juang versions of the stories of four-footed men, the men who turn into monkeys, and the hair growing from the tongue which wearies and cries out for death, are told with a special flavour that is all their own.[1]

The Kamar Stories[2]

This tribe, of some 10,000 people, lives mostly in the eastern part of Madhya Pradesh, but there is a strong group in the hills of what used to be the Khariar Zamindari of Orissa, and a few may be found in Koraput. The word Kamar or Kommar is elsewhere an occupational term meaning a worker in iron, but the Kamars of Khariar and Chhattisgarh have no tradition of this. Russell and Hira Lal considered that they were an off-shoot of the Gonds.

[1] References: E. A. Samuells, 'Notes on a Forest Race called Puttooas or Juangs', *J.A.S.B.*, Vol. XXV (1856), pp. 295 ff.; Dalton, 152-8; Risley, Vol. I, pp. 350-5; W. W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal* (London, 1877), Vol. XIX, pp. 286 ff; Elwin, 'Notes on the Juang', *Man in India*, Vol. XXVIII (1948), pp. 1-146. For the Bhuiyas see S. C. Roy, *The Hill Bhuiyas of Orissa* (Ranchi, 1935) and Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. II, pp. 305 ff.

[2] Kamar stories will be found at chs. I, 4, 5; V, 6; VII, 7; IX, 34, 41, 47, 53, 71, 93; X, 12, 13, 14; XI, 5; XII, 37; XIII, 7; XIV, 37, 53; XV, 21; XVI, 10; XVII, 2, 28, 34, 35; XVIII, 3, 13, 56; XXVI, 1; XXX, 14; XXXV, 2. Other Kamar stories are printed in MMI, chs. XI, 7; XII, 49; XIII, 10; XV, 7; XVI, 6; XXI, 16.

Their cult-hero is named Kachra-Dhurwa,[1] and they have a tradition that the former ruler of Bindra-Nawgarh was himself a Kamar. 'But a number of Kamars one day killed a bhimraj bird which had been tamed and taught hawking by a foreigner from Delhi. He demanded satisfaction, and when it was refused went to Delhi and brought man-eating soldiers from there who ate up all the Kamars except one pregnant woman. She took refuge in a Brahmin's hut in Patna and there had a son, which she exposed on a dung-heap for fear of scandal, as she was a widow at the time. Hence the boy was called Kachra-Durwa, or rubbish and dust. He was endowed with divine strength and severed the head of a goat made of iron with a stick of bamboo. On growing up he collected his fellow-tribesmen, and slaughtered all the cannibal soldiers, regaining his ancestral seat.'

The Kamars nowadays live in small settlements, usually apart from other people. They make their livelihood by agriculture, hunting and fishing, and basket-making. They are traditionally attached to axe-cultivation, and there is a legend that when Mahadeo gave the different castes and tribes their occupations, he handed the Kamar an axe and a bow and arrow, implying that he should make his living from the forest. In another story, Bhagavan teaches them to make baskets and work in bamboo.

Kamar social organization and religion is very similar to that of the Gonds, and the names of their exogamous clans appear to be derived from Gondi. But the tribe is now largely Hinduized, a fact which is clearly noticeable in the myths printed in this book.

The Kamar stories are often moral in character, a fact which distinguishes them from the older tribal tales of the Konds and Saoras. Bhagavan made the world virtuous, but it soon sank into sin, so he asked Bhimsen to teach men virtue and reform them; the great giant's idea of reform was to use his club so vigorously that he destroyed the world. Similarly, in another tale, Baramdeo saw the sinfulness of animals and rained down stones to punish them. The thunder is the noise which Indra makes when he shoots at the wicked Raja Kans. The gods create a Muni and send him to the world to do it good.

Most of the Kamar characters, in fact, are Hindu, though their

[1] This is the old spelling. Dube gives the name as Kachna Durwa.

conduct does not always correspond to that of the classic models whose names they bear. Mahadeo, for example, plays a prominent part in these myths. He engages in magic combat with Bhagavan and vanquishes him. Accompanied by his wife Parvati he wanders through the forest, and often helps mankind; he sees a starving woman and gives her wings to become an owl; he gives Kachra-Durwa tobacco and teaches him how to use it; he makes drums for men and is so absorbed in the task that Parvati has to make a tiger to frighten him home. But his character, like that of many other tribal gods, is ambiguous. Mahadeo is 'a little mad', always demanding food until Parvati finds him tobacco to make him quiet. He is usually drunk, and his body is so full of the fiery spirits he imbibes that when he voids himself he infects the chilli plant with its fire. He falls into trance, but there is no joy in it, so he creates the first Kalars to make him liquor. One day when he is very drunk he covers himself with ashes and careers about on his bull. He is not content to drink himself, but he shares his knowledge with mankind. His behaviour is often violent and erratic. He loses his temper with a ferryman, pulls out his tongue, throws him into the river and turns him into a crocodile. He forces Arjuna to marry his sister, though it was actually, of course, Krishna's sister, Subhadra, whom he married. He fights with Basmasur, whose blood gives its colour to the resin of the tinsa tree; during the fight tamarind leaves become their present size.

Another Hindu character who appears in the stories is Narada Risi, who performs penance but is disturbed by birds whom he punishes by twisting their tongues so that they can no longer talk. Bhimsen, of course is, known and in a story also told by the Binjhwars and which echoes the *Mahabharata,* destroys an ogre and makes the leech from his blood. There is an excellent and unusual tale of Bhimsen putting a log in his bed for Draupadi to massage; when she finds herself tricked she curses it to be covered with thorns. In a story about the origin of fire, we find the motif of Hanuman setting fire to Lanka from the *Ramayana.*[1]

[1] References: Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. III, pp. 323-30; S. C. Dube, *The Kamar.* Dube has an excellent chapter on Kamar myth and ritual.

The Kond Stories[1]

The Konds are probably the best known, as they are certainly the most numerous, of the Orissa tribes. At the 1941 Census, over 690,000 Konds were recorded, of whom 206,809 were in the Ganjam Agency, 176,502 in Koraput, and 132,047 in Kalahandi. For purposes of this book I have divided the Konds into three groups: the Kuttia Konds, the wild and distinctive tribe living in the remote mountains to the north-west of Ganjam; the more sophisticated Konds of Kalahandi, Koraput and the foothills and plains of Ganjam; and the Konda Doras, many of whom have come under Telugu influence.

The life of the Kuttia Konds depends almost entirely on axe-cultivation. To this they are attached as firmly as the Baigas of former times in the Maikal Hills. The practice controls their whole life; the style of their architecture is dominated by it, for shifting-cultivation means shifting villages, and many Kond settlements have a number of traditional sites to which they move every few years. The result is that they seldom bother to erect anything more than a camp—rows of tiny huts facing each other in a long street or round a square, with the floors of the low-roofed houses often below the level of the ground. The people spend a great deal of time in their clearings, and as a result come much more closely in touch with animals than those who have regular cultivation in settled fields.

All the Konds have, or had, the dormitory, separate huts for boys and girls, and marriages are arranged on a system of territorial exogamy, combined with totemic clans. They have a large pantheon of deities and furies, who must constantly be appeased, and the shamans and priests are of great influence. There are also Kond shamanins and, in the opinion of other tribes, many

[1] Kuttia Kond stories will be found at chs. I, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 33, 34, 40; II, 8, 9; III, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 32, 33; IV, 11, 12; V, 12; VI, 5; VII, 15; 16; VIII, 6, 7; IX, 5, 14, 15, 37, 55, 56, 57, 67, 76, 81, 88; X, 17, 18; XI, 9; XII, 19, 20, 40; XIII, 3, 9, 10; XIV, 5, 6, 14, 15, 16, 19, 26, 41, 45, 57, 58, 66; XV, 8, 9; XVI, 14, 20, 21, 33, 34, 35; XVII, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 16, 21, 25, 30, 36, 40, 43, 46, 49; XVIII, 6, 7, 8, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 32, 33, 41, 42, 43, 47, 58, 59, 68, 69, 70, 76, 79, 89, 96, 116, 117, 118, 119; XIX, 12, 13; XX, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36; XXI, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15; XXII, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; XXIII, 4; XXV, 12; XXVII, 7, 8, 18, 19, 20, 21; XXVIII, 7; XXIX, 9; XXX, 17, 18; XXXI, 9, 10, 11; XXXII, 7; XXXIII, 6, 7, 10; XXXIV, 7; XXXV, 3. Other Kuttia Kond stories are in MMI, ch. XVIII, 2, 40.

of these are witches: Kond magic is everywhere believed to be the most powerful in the world.

There is not a great deal of difference between the Kuttia Konds and those whom I have described as 'Konds' without a qualifying adjective. The main distinction between them is that in many cases the 'Konds' have adopted settled cultivation and have come under some degree of Hindu influence. Yet some of the Konds of Kalahandi are as wild and untouched as any in north-western Ganjam.[1]

All the Konds speak a distinctive Dravidian language, which is known as Kui, but there are considerable dialectal variations between the different groups which are scattered over a vast expanse of territory; the language of the Konds of south-western Koraput has been distinguished by the name Kuvi. It is, in fact, difficult to generalize about this great tribe. Some of its members in the Kond Mahals near Russellkonda are hardly distinguishable from Hindu peasants; others are among the most primitive people in the whole of India.

Deep in every Kond heart is the belief in the sacred and fertilizing power of human blood, and it is, of course, for their practice of human sacrifice that they have become known throughout the anthropological world. There is an extensive literature, ranging over a century, on the subject. Although the practice has long since been stopped officially, there can be little doubt that such sacrifices do sometimes occur, and a perusal of the stories collected in chapter XXVII will show how strongly the Konds remain attached to them. Today, the usual substitute for a human being is a buffalo, which is called by the old name Meriah, and in some of the remoter villages, old human

[1] Stories recorded from other Kond groups, and headed simply 'Kond' will be found at chs. I, 7, 32, 39; II, 6, 7; III, 13, 14, 15; IV, 9, 10; V, 9, 10, 11; VI, 3, 4; VII, 8, 9; IX, 20, 22, 26, 36, 54, 65, 66, 75, 85, 94; X, 15, 16; XI, 7, 8; XII, 10, 17, 18, 39; XIII, 2; XIV, 3, 4, 12, 13, 44, 48, 54, 55, 56, 73, 79, 80; XV, 7, 22; XVI, 31, 32, 40; XVII, 3, 13, 17, 29, 39, 42, 48; XVIII, 5, 19, 26, 57, 115; XIX, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11; XX, 18, 19, 20, 21; XXI, 2, 7, 13; XXIII, 2, 3; XXVI, 2; XXVII, 4, 5, 6, 16, 17; XXIX, 7, 8; XXX, 16; XXXI, 8; XXXII, 17; XXXIII, 8, 9; XXXIV, 6. Other Kond stories are printed in MMI, chs. I, 19, 20, 21, 22; XII, 11, 12, 37, 50, 82, 93; XV, 9, 10; XVI, 7; XVIII, 20, 21; XIX, 20.

Kondo Dora stories are recorded at chs. I, 31; III, 12; IV, 8; V, 8; XIV, 25; XVI, 29, 30; XXV, 10; XXVII, 3; XXVIII, 6; XXX, 15; XXXI, 7; XXXIII, 5; XXXIV, 4.

skulls are still used when the animal is offered to the Earth Goddess.

The Kond stories are remarkable for the large number of legendary figures whom they mention, and many Kond songs consist of little more than interminable lists of names of divine and human heroes. Chief among them is Nirantali and her consort Paramugatti. Rani-aru, who also creates things, is sometimes called Nirantali's daughter. We also find Ururengan and Penarengan, Kapantali and Sarantali, Sona-aru and Rupa-aru, and several others. Some of these sound like echo-names, and I was unable to get any information about them: they are just people in the stories. Bura Pinnu (Pinnu is the Kui word for 'god') and his wife Darni Pinnu, and Pusuruli, who is sometimes called his wife and sometimes his sister, also appear as creating things. The Kond stories, in fact, are in a great muddle and it is impossible to derive any logical or coherent account from them. They reflect the cultural confusion into which this large and scattered tribe has fallen; a very similar situation exists among the Gonds.

Nirantali, however, emerges as the most striking of the characters and the heroine of the majority of the stories. She is the same as Darni Pinnu or Mother Earth. She emerges from the ground at Saphaganna, the traditional home of the Kond race. I myself have paid a pilgrimage to the little cave under a rock where she first appeared and where there is still a triennial sacrifice of buffaloes. Here men and animals were born and the first trees were planted.

Unlike the Creators of other tribes, who often operate in lonely majesty, Nirantali does much of her work in company. With her assistants she makes the world and the sky. With Paramugatti she creates men and animals. She makes the Sun and Moon and gives them their children, the stars. She creates also the ogre who devours the Moon at the time of eclipse. She makes the fish whose tail flashes as the lightning; she makes the wind; by her curse gold and silver sink below the ground.

At first Nirantali feeds all mankind at her breast, but when they increase in number she teaches them to cultivate and gives them grain. She shows them how to clear their swiddens. She makes birds and animals, sometimes by transforming something

else, as when she turns a thread of her cloth into a worm or bits of bamboo into leeches, and sometimes by an elaborate process which is characteristic of Kond mythology.

This method, which is illustrated in the stories of the creation of the bee (ch. XIV, 16), the butterfly (ch. XIV, 19), the mosquito (ch. XIV, 66), and in the making of many other creatures, goes into considerable detail. Thus when Nirantali makes the mosquito, she first has to get her materials. She sends a crab to bring her some mud. This she dries in the sun for three days. Then she fashions it into the insect's body. With the stem of a fine grass she makes legs, with wax she makes eyes, and adds a little tail of wax. In the tail she puts the thorn of the prickly pear, and gives the mosquito thin flower petals for wings. She tells it that it will have to get its blood by sucking the blood of men and cattle. How different this is from the Bhattra story which describes how black smuts flying up from a forge just turn into mosquitoes of their own accord, without any divine intervention at all.

Nirantali is a curious, yet typical, blend of the human and the divine. At one moment we find her sleeping on a bed of cobras, using two of them as a blanket; at another she sweeps the floor of her house with her own hair. She has to please the gods by making flowers, and yet she herself is the divine court of appeal: animals go to her for light, the Moon runs weeping to her for a turban, she gives the Sun his golden crown. She gets drunk and quarrels with her husband; she is afraid of a cat; she makes mistakes—her first cow is a monster and she has to destroy it and try again; and her first attempt at man-making (he has a little tail like a goat's, three heads, three eyes, three noses, a mouth like a horse's and three horns, one on each head) draws protests from Paramugatti and his friends. Yet at the same time, she is the fertile mother of the world, and nourishes and comforts all mankind.

Paramugatti is regarded by the Konds with a certain amount of amusement. He is the typical Prince Consort. He assists his wife in making things, and sometimes acts on his own, as when he turns a hair from his horse into grass for it to eat. He is represented as an old man, though he is younger than Nirantali, and his wife makes weeds with hair from his beard. He has a

quick temper and gets angry with the fig tree and with his dog. He is the first to drink liquor, being taught to do so by a crow. He gets into trouble with his wife's bees, and when he watches his fields gets badly stung by mosquitoes. He is emotional and weeps; he is suspicious, and when Nirantali keeps a crow as a pet he thinks she is up to something and insists on turning it out of the house. It is not clear whether he is polygamous; certainly Rani-aru and Sona-aru are sometimes called his wives; but this may simply be due to different traditions.

Bura Pinnu is also regarded as a Creator. He reduces the heat of the Moon, creates the lightning by throwing his sacred thread into the sky, gives grain to men. He makes the sky; the Moon is his eldest daughter, and the stars are his other children.[1]

The Koya Stories[2]

The Koyas, who number all told about 100,000 persons, are widely distributed in Hyderabad, Bastar, the East Godaveri District and Rampa Agency of Madras, and the Malkangiri Taluk of Koraput District. A little, not very much, has been written about the Koyas of other areas, but hardly anything on the Koyas of Orissa.

Grigson considered that the Malkangiri Koyas (those represented in this book) were actually Bison-horn Marias. 'Intermarriage still takes place', he wrote, 'between the Marias of Sukma and the "Koyas" of Malkangiri; and these same Sukma clans intermarry with the clans on the Dantewara and Jagdalpur plateaux.' In 1941 there were nearly 28,000 of these Malkangiri Koyas, and their affinity to the Marias is obvious. They speak a dialect of Gondi; they have the splendid bison-horn marriage dance; they are traditionally axe-cultivators; they are devoted to the sap of the date palm; they are subject to yaws. Their religious and social customs are also similar: they have the same

[1] References: Bell, 65 ff.; Thurston, Vol. III, pp. 356-415; Winfield, *A Grammar of the Kui Language*. Winfield gives a useful bibliography of the large number of books and papers, mainly of early date, which deal with the Konds and their language.

[2] Koya stories will be found at chs. I, 6, 17, 23, 30; III, 11, 31; IV, 6, 7; V, 7; VII, 14; VIII, 5; IX, 4, 13, 21, 35, 42, 48, 80, 86; XI, 6; XII, 15, 38; XIII, 8; XIV, 2, 34, 38, 43, 46, 47; XV, 6; XVI, 2, 11, 28; XVII, 20, 44; XVIII, 4, 18, 46, 95, 114; XIX, 5, 6; XXI, 6; XXII, 10; XXXII, 12; XXXIV, 5. Three Koya stories from the same area are printed in MMI, ch. XII, 38, 39, 51.

system of clan-gods, and they erect stones and forked pillars for the dead. Like the Marias they give the name of Dadaburka to the first man, and they too have the motif (which is rare elsewhere) of the primeval boar from whose bristles came the earth to make the world. Like the Marias, too, they seem to be rather fond of tales of the Penis Elongatus: out of fifty-two stories recorded four deal with this motif.

'On the whole,' says Bell, 'the Koyas are an attractive race, of a prepossessing appearance, with a neat though not a powerful physique. They have perhaps been fortunate in inhabiting a most inhospitable country, which has not as yet tempted more civilized immigrants to settle in any numbers, and have thus escaped the contacts with an alien mode of life which are usually so demoralizing to hillmen. They are truthful and frank and very bold in hunting wild animals with bow and arrow, axes and spears. Though lazy cultivators they are good manual labourers.'

The chief agent in the Koya stories[1] is a divine being named Deur, whose name means simply 'god', but he is not a very convincing character. He is moralized and punishes men for 'sin', but he frequently does not intervene at all, and many instances of creation and transformation occur without his intervention. Bhima also appears and there is a fantastic tale of this famous hero-god ploughing with his teeth and sowing golden seed.

Some of the Koya stories are unusually charming. There is an excellent tale of a cock and hen who cremate the body of their dead benefactor; another delightful little tale describes how a party of girls dances into the sky and is transformed into the stars. The idea of hares being trained to carry taxes to a Raja's court is, so far as I know, unique, and so is the Koya theory of eclipses. Other unusual tales are those of the boy who cut up his girl's golden bangle to use as foot-rests by which to escape up a tree; of another boy who, in the days when men had hoofs, wrenched off one of his, whereupon it turned into a rock; of a third boy who had an enormous nose; and of the girl who, assisted by a pet

[1] References: Bell, pp. 77f; Thurston, Vol. IV, pp. 37 ff.; Grigson, pp. 53 ff. There is a valuable account of the Koyas of Hyderabad by Fürer-Haimendorf in his *Tribal Populations of Hyderabad, Yesterday and Today (Census of India, 1941,* Vol. XXIII, Part I). Thurston based his section on the Koyas mainly on articles by J. Cain, *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. V (1876) and Vol. VIII (1879), and *Madras Christian College Magazine,* Vol. V (1887-88) and Vol. VI (1888-89).

cat, used to cut the throats of lice which she caught in her hair.

The Parenga Stories[1]

Some ten thousand Parengas live in the southern part of the Pottangi taluk of the Koraput District. They are closely allied to the Gadabas, indeed they have sometimes been described as a branch of the Gadabas, though their language is more akin to Saora. Several myths in this book associate the two tribes; in one tale Gadabas and Parengas are called children of the same father but different mothers; in another they appear as brothers, of whom the Gadaba is the elder.

Parenga women weave their own cloth from fibre-yarn, but the pattern is different and the colour less attractive than the Gadaba fashion: it consists of thin red stripes on a white background. The Parengas have a social and village organization which is similar to that of the Gadabas; they too have, or used to have, dormitories for the younger members of the tribe. Like others who are beginning to come under Hindu influence, one of their major ethical preoccupations is whether they should eat beef or not; appetite and convenience struggle with social ambition. In one story, the Parengas are shown eating beef, and certainly in two others the attitude to the cow can hardly be called respectful.

The chief actor is, as usual, Ispur Mahaprabhu. Other gods mentioned are Dharmo Deota (the righteous god), Basmoti (who is probably Mother Earth), Bhima (the Rain-god), Megh Raja (the Cloud-god), Jamma (God of Death), Mother Lakshmi of prosperity, and Sita. There are a few rare and local gods such as Dong-Dong and Marding Deota, but in the main the atmosphere is vaguely Hindu. But it is far from being Hindu in the orthodox sense. There is, for example, a curious version of the Krishna legend, where Bhima is represented as stealing a girl's clothes while she is bathing; he takes her to his palace and then murders her as an offering to the tank when she refuses his advances. Another extraordinary tale describes how the 'two Mahaprabhus', Rama and Lakshman, seduce a merchant's

[1] Parenga stories will be found at chs. I, 42; IX, 16, 38, 39, 77, 78, 82; X, 19; XI, 10; XIV, 7, 17, 20, 27, 59, 67; XV, 10, 22; XVI, 15; XVIII, 34, 44, 45, 61, 62, 90, 106, 120; XX, 37, 38, XXV, 14; XXVIII, 8; XXXI, 12; XXXII, 18.

daughter. She has twins by them, and fearing the consequences, they take the children to the forest and abandon them. This is not, of course, intended by the Parengas to be discreditable to the heroes of the great epic; the story is probably very old and was told originally of tribal gods and heroes. Today the names Rama and Lakshman are familiar, and give a spurious air of modernity to the ancient stories.

It is remarkable that no fewer than nine out of the thirty-two Parenga stories recorded here deal with the Doms. Other stories are about Gadabas. The Parenga tale of the origin of thatching-grass resembles the Gadaba account of the same subject; actually, they all properly belong to Bondo mythology. There is also a reference to the Twelve Brothers, who are probably the Twelve Gadaba Brothers.

There are few references to specifically Parenga institutions. One of these compares the durable Parenga bark cloth with the less lasting but pleasantly white cloth of the Doms. Another story describes why it is that the Tiger clan honours the tiger and never kills it.

There are one or two charming stories: one is of the tiger which used to cook its food and employed a cub to fetch its fire; another is of the two lovers who turned into dogs. An interesting motif is that the spider was created to make a thread down which ghosts might descend to the Under World.[1]

The Saora Stories[2]

The word Saora (Sabara, Savara, Sora) has been spelt in many different ways and has been used, in the course of Indian history,

[1] References: Bell, p. 75; Thurston, Vol. VI, pp. 207-22 (on the Porojas generally).

[2] Hill Saora stories will be found at chs. I, 13. 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 24, 25, 43; II, 11, 12; III, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 34, 35; IV, 14, 15, 16, 17; V, 14, 15, 16; VI, 7, 8; VII, 4, 12, 17, 18; VIII, 8, 9; IX, 6, 7, 17, 18, 23, 28, 29, 30, 40, 46, 49, 50, 59, 60, 62, 63, 68, 69, 70, 79, 87, 95; X, 21, 22; 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28; XI, 11, 12; XII, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32; XIII, 4, 12, 13; XIV, 18, 21, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 49, 50, 60, 61, 62, 68; XV, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 24, 25; XVI, 17, 22, 37, 38, 39, 41; XVII, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24, 31, 32, 37, 41, 50; XVIII, 9, 10, 11, 12, 29, 30, 48, 64, 65, 66, 71, 72, 73, 74, 81, 91, 92, 97, 98, 99, 107, 121, 122, 123, 124; XIX, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20; XX, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59; XXI, 11, 16, 17; XXII, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28; XXIII, 5; XXV, 17,

for tribes distributed over a very wide area. Originally covering all the different branches of the great Kol family, the name is now applied chiefly to communities settled in Madhya Pradesh, Madras and Orissa, though there is often little in common between them except the name. In this book we are only concerned with two of these groups, those who call themselves Seori-narayan Saoras of the Sambalpur District, and the Hill Saoras of Ganjam and Koraput. The former, who are called simply 'Saora' in titles to the stories, take their special name from the village of Seori-narayan in Raipur District, where—according to one tradition—the aged ancoret Savari or Seori entertained Rama and Lakshman in her hermitage or—according to another legend—an old Saora tended the image of Jagannath before it found its way to its present home in the great temple at Puri. These Saoras are largely Hinduized in thought and manners, and have no apparent connexion with the Hill Saoras, from whom the majority of Saora stories were recorded.

In 1941, there were over 326,000 Saoras in Orissa, of whom some 125,000 were in Ganjam and 52,500 in Koraput. The Hill Saoras, who are distinguished from their brethren in the Ganjam and Koraput plains by many details of dress, manners and belief, have never been counted separately but probably about 100,0000 of them live in the beautiful mountains to the north of the Vamsadhara river.

Formerly a rebellious and warlike people, these Hill Saoras are still remarkable for their independence of spirit, and for the manner in which they have preserved traditions that must be very old. They occupy permanent and substantial settlements, and earn their living by cultivating the terraces which their ancestors have built with genuine engineering skill up the face of the steepest hills, and by tilling their swiddens in the remoter forests. Small occupational groups work in iron, bamboo and even brass.

The Hill Saoras are singularly free from caste-feeling. They

18; XXVI, 3; XXVII, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15; XXVIII, 10; XXX, 21, 22, 23, 24; XXXI, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19; XXXII, 10, 13, 14, 19; XXXIII, 13, 14, 15, 16; XXXIV, 8; XXXV, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Other Hill Saora stories, there called 'Lanjhia Saora', are printed in MMI, chs. I, 24, 25, 26, 27; VII, 24; XII, 16, 20, 40, 75, 84, 100; XIII, 13; XV, 11, 12; XVI, 8, 9; XVIII, 24, 25, 37; XIX, 21; XXII, 2, 3, 4.

Stories recorded from other Saora groups will be found at chs. I, 35, 36; V, 13; VI, 6; IX, 27; X, 20; XIV, 22, 28, 81; XVI, 36; XVIII, 23; XIX, 14; XXII, 17, 18, 19; XXIV, 6; XXV, 15, 16; XXVIII, 9; XXX, 19, 20; XXXI, 13; XXXII, 9; XXXIII, 11, 12.

mix freely with members of their own, usually despised, workers in iron or brass. They have some rather vague endogamous divisions, based in the main on territory, but these are not taken very seriously. Their social organization is based on the family descended from a common male ancestor, which is the only real exogamous division. These families tend to become identified with their own villages, to which their strong ancestor-cult naturally attaches them, and youths often but not invariably seek wives from other places. The Hill Saoras have no totemic groups and they do not have, and apparently never have had, the boys' or girls' dormitory.

Hill Saora religion is extremely elaborate and occupies a major part of the attention of the people, priests and laity alike. It recognizes a great pantheon of gods, who are generally imagined as malevolent (many of their names are simply those of various diseases), though there are a few—such as Darammasum (the Hindu Dharma) or the Sun-god Uyungsum—in whom justice and mercy is predominant. The word Kittung is applied to a number of hero-deities, one of whom appears in the myths as a Creator or Transformer. The unseen world is also peopled by the spirits of the ancestral dead and by tutelaries who enter into frequent and intimate relations with the living. Male and female shamans, as well as priests, have great influence; the shamans are chosen by spirit-brides from the Under World who assist them in their sacred duties; the shamanins too are 'married' to tutelaries, from whom they have invisible spirit children. The dead are also constantly intervening in human life, and there are frequent references in the stories to the funerary rites which are performed at considerable expense of money and time. Corpses must be cremated in due form, with a special kind of wood; the ashes must be ceremonially buried; and at some time after death an important rite called the Guar, at which buffaloes are sacrificed and menhirs erected, is performed by which the ghosts obtain entry into the Under World and the society of the ancestors. The wishes of the gods, the tutelaries and the ancestors are communicated to the living by means of the shamans and, directly, by dreams, and many examples will be found in these pages.

It must not be supposed, however, that Saora theology is formu-

lated in a clear and logical scheme. There is no Saora Church, no deposit of doctrine, nothing is formulated. The inspirations of a thousand shamans import into both doctrine and myth a great deal of variety, with the result that there is considerable confusion in the Saora mind even over so fundamental a matter as precedence among the gods. There is no agreement about the identity of the Supreme Being. In some areas, the Sun-god Uyungsum is regarded as the highest god in the pantheon. But even this is not clear, for Darammasum and Gadejangboi are often identified with him, and share his creative functions. The being whom the Saoras call Ramma, who is often associated with Bimma, is also sometimes held to be the Creator of the world and of mankind, but neither of these mysterious figures bears any real resemblance to the Rama and Bhima of the Hindu epics. In the majority of the myths, the Creator and Transformer is called Kittung.

Kittung is at once the name of an individual god and a sort of collective noun covering, according to varied traditions, twelve, sixteen, or even scores of deities. The myths contain obscure references to a Kittung Mahaprabhu who is greater than the Kittung who is known to men. In the confused creation stories the original couple who survived the primal flood are sometimes said to be Kittung and his sister; in one tale this Kittung makes the new world, in another 'the great Kittung in the sky does so'. But in yet other stories, the first couple are ordinary human beings and it is Kittung who creates and guards them.

Perhaps the inconsistency arises from the fact that the Saoras have never been able to make up their minds whether Kittung is a supra-mundane deity or a simple cult-hero. This is why, according to some myths, he made, and, according to others, he was the first man. Sometimes he is pictured as very definitely a sky-god, far above the world; at other times he is a homely person, a shaman of unusual powers, but walking the ways of earth and sharing the inconsistencies of human character.[1]

No Saora would agree as to the identity of the Kittung who appears so frequently in these stories. Some called him Ramma, some Koraitu, some Mahaprabhu; they were not very concerned about the question and obviously had not considered it. The

[1] I have studied the character of Kittung and the nature of Hill Saora mythology generally in great detail in my forthcoming *The Religion of an Indian Tribe,* and space does not permit me to repeat my conclusions here.

great actor, the hero of a hundred adventures, is Kittung; it does not matter what else he is called.

The Hill Saora, like the Kuttia Kond, stories stand out from all the others; they are comparatively free from external influence; many of them are strikingly original. There is hardly any aspect of Saora life with which they are not concerned.[1]

[1] References: W. Fawcett, 'On the Saoras', *J. Anth. Soc. Bom.*, Vol. I (1888); G. V. Ramamurti, *A Manual of the Saora (or Savara) Language* (Madras, 1931); G. V. Sitapati, 'The Soras and their Country', *J. Andhra Hist. Res. Soc.*, Vol. XII-XIV (1938-43); Thurston, Vol. VI, pp. 304-47.

PART ONE: HEAVEN AND EARTH

CHAPTER ONE

THE CREATION OF THE WORLD

The World

1

BINJHWAR

Golajhar, Sambalpur District

One day the gods gathered in their court and discussed how to make a world. Bhagavan said to them, 'Let each take a little blood from his body,' and they did so. Then he said, 'Let each rub a little dirt from his body,' and they did so. Then with the dirt and the blood they made a great *chapāti* and threw it on the waters and the world was made.

2

BONDO

Mundlipada, Koraput District

Bati Mundli and Bati Sisa found a little orphan boy, and they adopted him. Bati Sisa's wife used to take him daily to bathe him in a stream. This child had a penis three-and-a-half cubits long[2] and he used to keep it tied round his waist.

One day Bati Mundli and Bati Sisa went hunting and in their absence Bati Sisa's wife took the child to bathe as usual. While he bathed, she went to get leaves. While he was alone he unwound his organ. The wife came back and when she saw it, she thought, 'What great pleasure it would give.' She made the boy do it, but she died. The boy tied his thing again round his waist.

When Bati Mundli and Bati Sisa returned, they searched for the wife and found her body. They asked the boy, 'Why did

[1] For a detailed study of the Hindu background of the creation myths together with many tribal variants, see MMI, p. 3 ff.

[2] This idea of the long penis is widely distributed and may be very old, for it occurs in Ktesias. See MMI, p. 254 ff.

she die?' and he replied, 'She fell ill and died.' They saw blood flowing from the vulva and found blood also on his penis. They undid it and when they measured it they found it was three-and-a-half cubits long. They killed the boy and from his hands and feet came the trees, from his hair the grass, from his bones the rocks, from his blood the red earth, and from his head the coconut tree.

3

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

Long ago, when the earth was covered with water, Rumrok hung a boar in a spider's web up in the sky.

When Rumrok wanted to make a new world he was unable to find any earth. He searched everywhere without success and it was only when he went to the boar that he found a little earth sticking to its tail. He removed it and sprinkled it on the face of the water. After a while the earth grew and grew and soon there was mud everywhere and the water began to dry up. But the mud remained damp and dirty and to harden it Rumrok killed the boar and ground its bones into powder and spread it over the world. When the mud dried it was strong and steady.

Then Rumrok created animals and said to the boar, 'You may always lie in mud and you will be as strong as the earth itself.'

4

KAMAR

Tipajhir (Khariar), Sambalpur District

When Bhagavan first made the world and created all living creatures from dirt rubbed from his body, Baramdeo saw the sinfulness of animals and was displeased. In his anger he sent down stones as rain and killed many animals and small creatures. The stones piled up in great heaps.

At that time a Dano was born. He collected the stones in heaps and raised them very high. The animals that had escaped destruction climbed up on the heaps of stone and bothered the gods. The gods, angered by this behaviour, rubbed dirt from

their bodies and created a Muni whom they sent to live on earth. When they saw him the stones asked the Muni, 'Who are you?' The Muni said, 'I am a Guru who has come to make disciples.' The heaps of stone said, 'Make us also your disciples.' The Muni replied, 'Lie down and sleep all of you and I will make you my disciples.' When the stones had lain down and slept the Muni said, 'From today none of you will be able to rise up again.' The stones turned into mountains and have remained so to this day.

5

KAMAR

Tipajhir (Khariar), Sambalpur District

Bhagavan made the world virtuous, yet after a time it sank into sin. Indeed it soon happened that there was nowhere in the world that had not sunk into sin. Then Bhimsen, seeing the evil state of the world, was angry and took his mighty club[1] and went with Bhagavan to punish men.

Bhagavan said to Bhimsen, 'Brother, men everywhere are committing sin. Teach them virtue and reform them.' And he returned home. Bhimsen went on alone to the place where men were living and beat them so hard that the world sank down and all the earth was covered with water.

6

KOYA

Tamsa, Koraput District

In Lanka village were many Koyas, of whom one Sukra was the most wealthy. He had five sons and when they grew up he arranged their marriages. The elder boys had children, but not the youngest.

In those days there were no rocks, and men had hoofs like

[1] Bhima's club is famous in Hindu literature: he was taught to use it by Drona and Balarama; he used it to fight Duryodhana and beat Kichaka to death. It is characteristic of the irascible and brutal Bhima that he should beat men to destruction instead of teaching them virtue as Bhagavan, always imagined as gentle and benevolent, had desired.

horses. One day the youngest brother caught his wife flirting with another man and gave her a good beating. The girl ran away to her parents' house and the boy followed her. As he chased her like a cow, they came to Chantal Hill. The girl hid by the road and as the boy ran by he caught his foot in a root and wrenched off his hoof. He sat crying with the pain; when he felt better he took the hoof and cut it up with his knife, throwing bits over the hillside where they turned into rocks. One piece hit the girl and she screamed: the boy went to her and when she tried to escape, the rocks got in her way and he caught her.

7

KOND

Torgaballi, Ganjam District

In the old days, Bela Pinnu lived in the sky. Then he came down to earth. But the earth was not fully formed in those days; it shook to and fro. When Bela Pinnu put his foot down it went through. So Bela Pinnu brought stones from the river Borajuri-batoli and put them on the ground and sat on them. At that very moment Bogi Pinnu was born in Saphaganna. He looked here and there, he saw nobody anywhere, and hanged himself for loneliness. Bela Pinnu went to the place, cut up the body and threw it in all directions.

From the pieces great hills were formed. Bela Pinnu's sons came down from the sky to find him. They were the seven Suns, and as they shone the hills were burnt down and turned into plains.

8

KUTTIA KOND

Rangaparu, Ganjam District

One day Ururengan and Penarengan were out hunting. They sighted a sambhar but could not get it. They went to Nirantali and said, 'We've been hunting and are very tired, we haven't got a single animal.' Nirantali thought and bound a sambhar

by her charms so it could not escape and told Ururengan and Penarengan to go for it. 'Before you bring it into the village, let me know,' she said. Ururengan and Penarengan went to the forest, killed the sambhar, sent word and brought it in. Nirantali came out with her fan full of ashes which she threw on the sambhar's head. Whatever she threw turned into stones, black, grey, white. Ururengan and Penarengan asked, 'Why?' She said, 'There are no stones, just flat ground; without stones, how can you worship? How can you sharpen your axes? How can the earth be finished?'

9

KUTTIA KOND

Surangbaro, Ganjam District

At first all the world was water. There were no animals, no things. Then Chanchenga and Pachenga, the first Konds, came out of the water. They swam round all the four quarters of the world. In the midst of the water was a great rock; the water covered it to the depth of two fingers. The two Konds made their home on it.

Many days passed. Then the Konds went to Nirantali and Kapantali for soil. They said, 'There is no soil, what can we do for an earth to live on?' Nirantali brought four handfuls of earth out of the bun of her hair and said, 'Throw one handful to each quarter of the world and soil will cover the water.'

The Konds took the soil to their rock and, standing there, threw it in all four directions. The earth set on the surface and the water sank down. The Konds stepped on the earth but their feet went through. They set up a bamboo pole and sacrificed a cow, a buffalo and a pig before it and the earth became dry and hard. The bones of their victims became rocks; the hair became trees and grass.

10

KUTTIA KOND

Karkori, Ganjam District

At the time that Nirantali and Sarantali were born in Sapha

ganna, there was no soil on the earth: it was all black rocks. Nirantali and Sarantali, therefore, decided that they must have soil and sent Kiratali and Pakatali, two Konds, to find it.

The two Konds wandered everywhere and found nothing but rocks. When they were utterly exhausted they sat down to rest. 'If we take nothing home, Nirantali and Sarantali will be angry,' they said.

On their way home, therefore, as they passed the hills Jindibango and Jindinela, they said to them, 'If you want men to live, give us soil: if you want them to die, refuse.' So saying, they sat down and began like bears to claw at the rocks with their nails. The rocks broke open and earth appeared inside, red earth and black and white and yellow. This they took to Nirantali. She sent them back to dig up all they could with their nails.

Nirantali and Sarantali dried the earth for a week in the sun. When it was dry, they put it in a hollow rock and pounded it with a stone and broke it into powder. Then Nirantali and Sarantali thought, 'If we are to spread this out with our own hands it will take us a very long time. We must think of some scheme to get it done quickly.' So they called Barapunaiko and got him to make a bamboo sieve. Nirantali and Sarantali sprinkled the dust over the rocks with the sieve. In seven days the world was ready: the soil-world was ready: the rock-world was covered. But here and there the soil was thin and the rock-world projected above it as it does today.

II

KUTTIA KOND

Rangaparu, Ganjam District

At first there was nothing but water. Nirantali and Kapantali were born in the water and with them Sona-aru and Rupa-aru. Sona-aru and Rupa-aru did not like being in the water and said, 'You are gods: you can live anywhere. We are human beings and cannot live in water. Show us somewhere to live.' Nirantali and Kapantali searched everywhere for earth, but could not find it and they said, 'Without earth how can we make a place where you can live?' They said 'Surely you can do something.' Nirantali

was angry and spat on the water. From her spittle a swarm of white ants was born. From their excreta came the world. She spread a little of it on the water, then a little more and went on till the world was ready.

In this way the whole world was made from the excreta of a swarm of ants.

12

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

At the beginning when the world was nothing but rocks and water, Nirantali, Kapantali, Paramugatti and Mangragatti lived on a rock. They made the earth and the clouds. Then they made four iron pillars to hold up the sky. Three pillars were of the proper size, the fourth was too small. They brought a great rock, piled on earth and put the fourth pillar on it. Now there was something to hold up the clouds. On the rock they put all kinds of trees: it became a hill and began to grow till it was the biggest of all hills. Here Dimbul Pinnu made his home. He named it Dimbul Hill. Every year to this day a white goat or cock is sacrificed there. In villages far away, the Konds make little mounds of stones and sacrifice to them.

13

HILL SAORA

Maneba, Ganjam District

When the earth was submerged, Ramma and Bimma went to live in the sky. All creatures died, but Ramma and Bimma had a cock and hen. The hen began to lay eggs; she laid seven. On the day she was about to lay the eighth, she could not get up to the sky to lay it and the egg fell down, down, down into the ocean. It broke and the white spread over the water. When it dried, it became the new earth. The egg-shell turned into rocks and bits of it were scattered all over the world.

14

HILL SAORA

Liabo, Ganjam District

When the world sank down into the water, the hills and trees were covered. But in a gourd floating on the water were a brother and sister. In time they broke the gourd open and came out and made the new world. They planted trees and plants and made men. In those days men lived under trees.

One year there was a great mango crop and when the fruit ripened, a Saora gathered some of it and took it to Kittung Mahaprabhu. He ate the fruit and was pleased. He said, 'You Saoras will never make a living on ordinary fields: I will prepare hill-clearings for you.'[1] He gave the Saora seeds of five of the mangoes and said, 'Put four of these seeds in the four quarters of the world and the one remaining on top of them.' The Saora planted the seeds and white ants gathered and built nests which grew up into great mountains.

First of all there were four mountains—Thumpa, Tangliya, Bodang, Kintala. This enabled the Saoras to cultivate on the hillsides. Gradually other mountains came into being.

15

HILL SAORA

Kankaraguda, Ganjam District

In the days when the whole world was covered with water a gourd floated on the surface. At that time the Sun and the Moon were pregnant. The gourd was blown to and fro by the wind. Then the Sun and Moon gave birth to their children. The Sun had seven sons, but the Moon had a great multitude of children. They were all girls except two, the stars that are called Twins, the morning and the evening stars.

The seven Suns rained great heat upon the earth and the water covering its surface dried up and dry land appeared. The gourd

[1] The fact that the practice of axe-cultivation is established in their mythology is of great importance to the Saora mind. Cf. also ch. I, 25.

settled on the ground and Kuraitusum came out of it. He looked round and saw nothing but desolation. 'How can I live here alone?' he asked. The Sun replied, 'You are Kittung. You can do what you will. Create men and animals to keep you company.'

Kuraitusum went back into his gourd and created a tiger. It came out of the gourd, but it began to burn on account of the great heat of the seven Suns. It gave a mighty roar and the Sun and Moon were so frightened that they rushed up into the sky. The tiger went back into the gourd and Koraitusum saw that it was covered with stripes, which it still has in memory of the day when it was burnt.

Kuraitusum healed its wounds, 'But,' he said, 'everything I create will be burnt by the seven Suns.' So he persuaded the Moon to conceal her children in her hair and to tell the Sun that she had devoured them all. The Sun, hearing this, ate his own seven sons and this filled him with great heat, yet it was less severe than it was before. When the seven sons had been eaten, Kittung brought the tiger out again and they looked round the world. They saw nothing but desolation and the tiger said, 'Where is the jungle for me to live in and what am I to do?' Kittung pulled out the hair from his body and threw it over the world and grass and trees sprang up, and he sent the tiger to live in their shade. Then he created the red-faced monkey which is the tiger's younger brother. After this Ramma was born and Kittung sent him to live with his brothers. Then Bimma was born, but he was afraid to go into the jungle. In this way Kittung created men and animals.

Last of all Kittung created fire and burnt his gourd. He went away and made his camp on a great hill. In the end, he went up to live in the sky.

16

HILL SAORA

Gunduruba, Koraput District

The first world was made of lac and it lasted a long while.

In a village were five Sundi brothers. They set up a liquor-still and made liquor. It was very fine liquor, indeed a little too

fine, for when it flowed out it burst into flames and the house caught fire and the fire spread through the world and melted the lac and the world sank down below the waters.

Kittung Mahaprabhu had a hen's egg.[1] He took it in his hand and made a hole in a gourd. He crept in and shut the hole after him. Everything else was destroyed and water covered the world.

The Origin of Clay[2]

17

KOYA

Phulimetla, Koraput District

One Sukra lived on Kalmela Hill in a little hut. Gradually people gathered round him and they too built little huts and in time there was a village. One day the villagers went hunting and, as they were coming home, they saw a jungle fowl. Sukra and his friends tried to catch it but it flew up into a tree and escaped. But they found the nest and took five of the eggs. Sukra put them under one of his hens along with her own eggs.

When the brood was hatched, they found that one of the jungle fowl's eggs was addled but the others were all right and they got four fine chicks from them. Sukra took the bad egg out of the village and put it under a big stone. But in the hot weather the stone split with the heat and broke the egg. What happened then? The red yolk sank into the earth and coloured it red, while the white mixed with the soil and became white clay.

18

MURIA

Siunaguda, Koraput District

In Machaguda lived a Gond ancient. He had no children, but

[1] This must be the same egg which in ch. I, 13, breaks and creates the new world when the white spreads over the face of the waters.

[2] Clay, red or white, is of great importance for the cleanliness of tribal life. Tribesmen who make houses with mud walls, or with mud-plastered bamboo, apply a dressing of red or white clay-wash which enormously improves the appearance of a village. Hill Saoras dress their houses in red and sometimes in white; so do many Gadabas: Gonds and Murias use a whitewash.

many cattle. He was very rich. One day came the Tengamar thieves who beat up and rob every village. When the old man heard they were coming he took his herds to the forest and hid, making himself a small hut. He could not get any grain and lived on the milk of his cows. He made a pit in the ground and put some of the milk there to form curds.

The old man stayed in the forest for a long time, then he fell ill and died. His cattle scattered, the villagers took some, tigers took the rest. In the place where the old man had put the curds the earth turned white. One day a woman and man of Pawanguda went to that hill for wood and tied it in bundles by the pit. The woman saw the white earth and picked it up; she found it soft, spat on it, mixed it on her hands and found that when it dried it was very white. She thought it would look well on the wall of her house. She took it home and used it as a whitewash.

19

HILL SAORA

Thodrangu, Koraput District

Somra the Chief had a son. He arranged the boy's marriage and afterwards these two, man and wife, lived happily together but when the time for a child to be born drew near, they quarrelled. The husband beat his wife and she went away to her parents' house. It was a long journey and she was caught at night in a great jungle and slept under a tree. There her son was born. The mother was too weak to go on and for three days she rested under the tree. No one came to find her.

On the fourth night a wild animal carried off the child and the mother wept bitterly. She was too weak to go to her parents' house and her milk dripped from her breasts to the ground. Kittung and his wife came by and saw the girl. 'Why are you crying?' asked Kittung and she told her story. Kittung's wife said, 'The milk will stop and there'll be no more trouble for you. From your milk will come white clay. When you wash your house with it, it will be very clean and good.' They took the poor girl with them and Kittung sent her to her husband's house. She took some clay with her and soon the house looked like a palace.

20

HILL SAORA

Kamalasingi, Koraput District

When the world was first made, all the soil was white and houses and shrines were white also. Women had no menses in those days. Sangta Saora's wife was the first to have a period. Her blood flowed for fifteen days and spread over the world. It mixed with the soil and made it red.

The Discovery of Iron

21

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

At first, when cultivation began, there were no implements. Mahaprabhu said to Narsingh the Lohar, 'Make implements of cultivation.' The Lohar said, 'But how am I to make them? Show me.' Mahaprabhu went to him and at night gave him a dream of Baman Dei and said, 'Go to Bhairo Dongar where there is an iron pit. You will find a great iron rock, dig below it and you'll find iron. Sacrifice a goat and a pig there.' He gave him gold pincers, a silver hammer and a bronze bar and told him how to work.

The next day the Lohar and his wife went to the hill with a goat and pig and did all that Mahaprabhu had commanded them. They got charcoal, built a kiln and made tools. They came home and sold a sickle for one anna, a hoe for six pice and a ploughshare for two annas. After this men began to use implements.

22

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

Soon after the Middle World was made, the twelve Viskarma brothers came to build a temple for Ispur Mahaprabhu. They did not make much progress, for they had no iron tools to dig with and nothing to break stones.

So they went to Lohagarh to find iron. On this hill they found Little Lohars and Big Lohars. These people had plenty of iron. The twelve brothers stole their iron from them, and took it home and made it into tools.

In this way iron came to the world.

23

KOYA

Chirpalli, Koraput District

No one used to work in iron at first. Deur came one night to inspect men, going from house to house. He saw there was no iron and therefore no field implements. He called a Kommar and took him to Mardel Hill. In the place where Panduel Koya lived, he found some *irpi* chaff thrown away. This turned into iron. Deur took the Kommar there and showed him how to dig up the iron and smelt it and then to make it into implements.

24

HILL SAORA

Potta, Koraput District

When men first worked in their fields they had to use wooden tools, which quickly wore out and in any case were not strong enough. Kittung wandered all over the mountains in search of iron but could not find any. He rubbed some dirt from his body and dug a pit on Korpalu Hill, put his dirt in it, and came home. A week later he came again and found iron-ore in the pit. He dug it out and put it in the sun to dry. He made a furnace and worked the iron into tools, which he distributed to men. Then he called the Luaramaran and taught him what to do. Since then the Luaramaran has been the blacksmith of the Saoras.

25

HILL SAORA

Arangulu, Koraput District

Originally men had no tools and they found it very difficult to

work in their fields and clearings. One day Kittung called Kuppi Saora and took him to a hill and showed him how to get iron, make it ready and prepare implements.

Kuppi Saora and Kittung worked there on the hill and Kuppi Saora made an axe. He made the shaft of *simsim* wood. It took fifteen days. Once he had made one axe, he made a great many and heaped them up in a pile. Kittung called the headmen of every village and gave an axe to each, saying, 'With this cut down the forest and make clearings and you'll be able to earn your living.'

After this Kuppi Saora made sickles, hoes and knives and soon everyone was using iron.

The Creation of Gold and Silver

26

BINJHWAR

Kelkadabri, Sambalpur District

We used to live in Garha-Mandla[1] and we served the Raja of Korea as graziers. We used to live in the cowsheds with the cows. One of our women used to remove the dung. Every day she found a little gold in it and so gradually she grew very rich. But after a time the cow which gave this precious dung died and we dragged its corpse to the jungle and buried it. The woman wept and the Rani called her and asked her what the trouble was. The woman said, 'That cow used to pass gold in its dung.' The Rani sent her men to the burial-place and dug up the body of the cow and they found that the excreta in its belly was all gold. The place where the cow was buried was the first gold-mine, from which all the gold in the world has come. Because we come from there, we are known as Sona-Kaniha-Binjhwars.[2]

[1] This tradition gives some support to the belief that the Binjhwars of Sambalpur are descended from the Baigas of Mandla and Balaghat, among whom there is a Binjhwar sub-division. See my *The Baiga*, p. 7.

[2] One of the divisions of the Binjhwar tribe, the Sonjharas, earned a living by washing for gold in the sands of the Mahanadi River.

27

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

Bojai Didayi lived with his family in Jhariguda. This was before the days of gold and silver. Bojai had a cock and a hen which had never laid an egg.

Now, though the Didayi did not know it, there was gold and silver just under the surface of the earth behind his house. One day the cock and hen scratched some of it up; the metal was soft in those days and the fowls ate it. They did this daily and used to pass gold and silver in their droppings about the house. The girls of the family, not knowing what it was, used to sweep it up with the refuse and throw it away. But one day the youngest girl noticed that it sparkled and shone in the sun and when she pointed this out to the others they began collecting it.

One day shortly afterwards a goldsmith had a dream telling him that there was gold and silver in Jhariguda and that he should make it into ornaments. He hastened to the place and when he arrived there he found no one but the youngest daughter at home. He asked her for the gold and silver, promising to make her ornaments, and she at once gave him what she had. He wandered about round the house and soon noticed where the fowls were scratching up the precious metals. He waited till nightfall and then quietly dug up as much as he could carry, wrapped it in his bundle and ran away.

Silver and Gold were angry at being stolen in this way, and they became hard and sank deep into the earth, with the result that today they are rare as well as precious.

28

GADABA

Onagelu, Koraput District

Ispur Mahaprabhu had a son. One day Ispur made a cow out of mango wood. When it was ready, he said to his son, 'Son, take this cow to the tank for water.' The boy took it to the tank, but when the cow had drunk water it turned on

him and attacked him. The boy lost his temper and cut off the cow's head with his sword. When he returned home, Ispur Mahaprabhu said, 'Where is the cow?' 'It is asleep,' answered the boy.

The next day Ispur Mahaprabhu made a she-buffalo out of *sāja* wood. When it was ready he said to his son, 'Son, take this she-buffalo to the tank for water.' The boy took it to the tank, but when the she-buffalo had drunk water it turned on him and attacked him. The boy lost his temper and cut off the she-buffalo's head with his sword. When he returned home, Ispur Mahaprabhu said, 'Where is the she-buffalo?' 'It is asleep,' answered the boy.

The next day Ispur Mahaprabhu made a sow out of jackfruit wood. When it was ready, he said to his son, 'Son, take this sow to the tank for water.' The boy took it to the tank, but when the sow had drunk water, it turned on him and attacked him. The boy lost his temper and cut off the sow's head with his sword. When he returned home, Ispur Mahaprabhu said, 'Where is the sow?' 'It is asleep,' answered the boy.

The next day, Ispur Mahaprabhu made a she-goat out of *mahua* wood, and the next day a sheep out of *purai* wood, and the next day a mare out of a plantain stalk, and the next day an elephant out of bombax wood. Each day the boy took the animals to the tank for water; they attacked him and he cut off their heads. When he went home, he told his father that they were asleep.

Then Ispur Mahaprabhu said to himself, 'I have made many animals, but my son kills them as soon as they are ready.' He felt very angry with the boy and killed him with his sword. He threw the body into a pit and there the flesh turned into gold and the bones to silver.

29

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

In a certain country was a golden tank. Ispur Mahaprabhu's daughter Sonadai went daily to bathe there. This girl's body

shone like gold. When she bathed and rubbed dirt from her arms and legs, even the dirt was golden. After she had done this for a long time, the banks of the tank were covered with golden dirt and that is why it was called the golden tank.

To prevent the gold being stolen, Ispur put tigers, bears, snakes and Asurs to guard the tank.

But one day a Raja heard about it. He made a tunnel under ground to the tank, and through this tunnel he removed the gold. When he had it, he sold it to merchants and goldsmiths. In this way gold came to the world.

30

KOYA

Dudimetla, Koraput District

When the earth sank down below the flood, Dadaburka[1] and his sister Sukri were saved in their gourd. When they married, the sister on her wedding-day bathed with seven pots of hot and seven pots of cold water and rubbed turmeric on her body. She threw the turmeric and body-dirt away in a small pit and covered it with earth. When children were born, and there were many of them, they separated into different castes and only one boy remained with his parents. They got very old and one day Sukri remembered the dirt which she had thrown away when she was a young girl. 'Is it still there?' she wondered and went to dig it up. She found the pit full of gold, shining like the sun. Hastily, she covered it with earth, for she thought, 'If I tell the boy he will spoil it. I'll call some clever person to make it into something.' She sent her son to fetch a Sonar. The mother sent the boy away and secretly took the Sonar to the pit. 'This is gold,' she said. 'Tell no one where you found it, but take it and make all kinds of ornaments and sell them?'

But after the death of the old people Government seized all the gold.

[1] In a Bison-horn Maria story, Dada Burka is the name of the gourd. MMI, p. 30.

31

KONDA DORA

Borabandha, Koraput District

On Kanhali Hill were two brothers of the Dora caste. One day they set traps on the hill and a deer was caught and lay there all night. In the morning the brothers went to examine their traps and found the deer. They were about to kill it, when it said, 'Don't kill me. First hear my word; then kill me if you wish.' The brothers stood still and said, 'Then tell us quickly.' The deer said, 'If you kill me, don't eat my liver and gall-bladder. Put them in a new pot, tie it up in new cloth and hang it from the roof of your house. In the morning you'll find enough gold and silver to make you rich and happy all your lives.'[1]

The brothers killed the deer and did all that it had told them to do. The next day they found gold and silver in their pot. They sold it and became rich. When the brothers died, the treasure sank into the earth and from this seed gold and silver has grown all over the world.

32

KOND

Rodigumma, Ganjam District

In the days when men were few, there was no gold or silver. After the population increased, there was a great famine and men began to die; they had only flowers and fruit to live on. This lasted three years and the people left their villages to live in the hills. Engrada and Bataroli went to Tikawali Hill and lived there. At the end of that time there was grain in Bhawanipatna. There was a Dom called Bodseth and the people bartered their jungle produce with him for rice. When they brought a load of roots and fruit, he gave a double handful of rice for it.

One day Engrada went for roots to a hill and his wife remained at home. At midday Engrada started home. By the

[1] Cf. ch. I, 33, where a tiger's body turns into gold and silver. There are also Gond and Dhoba stories in which parts of a magic fish suffer this agreeable transformation. See also MMI, pp. 120, 123.

path was a mango tree loaded with fruit, and he got a pole and knocked down six mangoes. Under the tree were some quail and when the mangoes fell they killed six of them. Under the same tree a hare was sleeping and a branch fell on it and killed it. As it died, it kicked out with its legs and knocked up some earth and there was gold and silver. When Engrada saw it, he thought it was some sort of special root and took it home along with the hare and quail. When they cut up the hare they found a small bee in its ear and in the ear was a whole cupful of honey. They took honey, quail, gold and silver to Bodseth and he gave them a load of rice for it. After that, every day Engrada got gold and silver and exchanged it for rice.

Gradually other people heard of it and the news reached Kirimal Sahib who came and in the name of Government took it away from the Konds.

33

KUTTIA KOND

Mundimaska, Ganjam District

A Kond went to find an *irpi* tree in the forest. There was an old blind tiger there. When the Kond began to cut the tree, the tiger heard the voice of the axe and said, 'Who has come to my jungle? Who is making this noise?' The Kond said, 'It is me.' The tiger said, 'Come here.' The Kond replied, 'No; you'll eat me, I daren't.' The tiger said, 'No, I won't eat you; come.' The Kond was gradually persuaded to come. Then the tiger said, 'I'm blind; give me medicine.' The Kond answered, 'Very well.' He took the tiger home with him.

As they went along, they passed a barking-deer the tiger had killed earlier that day and the tiger gave it to the Kond.

From a hill there flowed a stream and there was a little fall over which the water rushed. The Kond said to the tiger, 'Put your head under the flow and look up.' The tiger did so and the water flowed into its eyes and cleaned them and it was able to see.

After that the tiger used to bring the Kond food every day and he got very fat. But he said, 'I'm not really fat yet.' After

a month the tiger said, 'When you are properly fattened, how I'll enjoy eating you!'

One day the tiger brought home a sambhar. The man dug a pit in the path and put spikes in the bottom and sat behind a tree to watch. The tiger fell into the pit and began to roar with pain, but the man shovelled stones and earth over it and killed it. But before it died, the tiger cried, 'Take out my entrails and bury them separately and bury the head and paws and feet separately too.' Seven days later the Kond found the head had become a brass pot; the entrails had turned into a gold necklace, the bones into silver, the skin into every kind of cloth. Now he was not only fat, but rich.

34

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

In Bariganna, when Nirantali came up out of the ground she brought a lot of gold, silver, brass and copper with her. Afterwards Paramugatti was born and the two lived together as man and wife. Their first son was born and six months later Nirantali and Paramugatti took the gold and silver to the east and threw it down and there were mountains of gold and silver. Great rocks of gold lay about. Then six more sons were born. When the seventh grew up, the parents found that the care of so many boys was too much for them and they said, 'Go and get your food where you will. We cannot feed you any longer.' They said to the eldest, 'Go, cut the jungle and make your fields on the hillside.' To the middle son, they said, 'Go to the east and there you'll find gold and silver.' So they gave work to each son and sent them away. From the son who went to the hills of gold and silver came the Sonar caste; the children of the eldest son who cut the forest were Konds.

When the first Raja was made, he took the mountains of gold and silver as his, so Nirantali and Paramugatti cursed them and sent them below the ground and the hills were covered with rocks and trees.

35

SAORA

Marriguda, Ganjam District

Chaitagadu Saora had three wives. For many years they had no children, but at last when she was quite an old woman the youngest wife conceived and in due time was delivered of a baby daughter. When the girl grew up Kittung gave her in marriage to the son of Jammasum. At the wedding the people put turmeric first, and then rice-flour, on them. They rubbed it off, put it in a leaf-cup and threw it away behind the house. When the guests had departed and the celebrations were done, Chaitagadu found the rice-flour had turned into silver and was shining in the sun. He picked it up and took it home. That night he saw Kittung in a dream, and the god said, 'This is silver. Keep it with you always. It will be for ornaments and for money.' Chaitagadu kept it for a long time and then, needing money for three buffaloes for sacrifice at his father's stone-ceremony, he took it to a merchant and sold it. Thus it spread throughout the world.

36

SAORA

Kusudda, Sambalpur District

In Manjhpali lived a Gond and his Gondin. They were very poor. They had no relatives. They made a field, for they had one bullock which they yoked to a plough. Thus they prepared their field with only one bullock.

One year when the Gond had sown small millet, his wife brought him gruel every day. The week after sowing, when the wife was bringing the gruel, she got very late and the Gond was angry. He undid the bullock and went home in a temper. There was a lot of mud and in it was hidden a magic stone. The wife had a bell-metal ornament on her foot; this hit the stone and turned into gold.

There was a stream in which she washed her feet and when

the mud came off she saw one of the ornaments was gold. As she came out, she met her husband and he asked, 'Who gave this to you?' She said, 'No one; I hit a stone and it turned into gold.' The husband went to look for it, pushing his ox-goad into the mud. Suddenly he drew it out and found it had turned into gold. He took the stone home and everything became gold and he grew rich. When he died, the stone and all the gold sank into the ground, so now if anyone wants gold he has to dig for it.[1]

The Discovery of Salt

37

GADABA

Onagelu, Koraput District

Formerly there was no such thing as salt, and when men talked they could not understand each other, for they had thorns in their tongues.

There was an old merchant who had a daughter and a pair of bullocks. He used to load the bullocks with his wares and take them round from bazaar to bazaar. Once he went to the Desapali country. There was a lake there; a white mist rose from the water, and white scum had gathered thickly on the banks. A lot of it had dried and shone white in the sun.

The merchant camped on the bank and his daughter prepared his food. When he had rested a little he took his bullocks down to the lake to drink. But the bullocks did not seem to want the water; instead they greedily ate the dried scum on the bank. The merchant's daughter finished her cooking and saw what the bullocks were doing. She wondered what the white stuff they were eating could be. She went down to the lake, picked up a bit and tasted it. She was delighted with the taste and ran to tell her father. He too went to the lake and tasted the stuff. 'If we sell this,' he cried, 'we will soon be rich.' He emptied his sacks and filled them with the salt.

[1] See also the Kond story (ch. XXI, 9) in which gold and silver are produced at the touch of menstrual blood.

As they were going along to the next bazaar, one of the sacks broke and the salt was scattered on the road. As they were trying to pick it up, another merchant, a man called Raisalpariha, came along with twelve score bullocks carrying oil-seed. The bullocks began to lick up the salt on the road, jostling each other to get as much as they could. The old merchant was angry and abused Raisalpariha for letting his bullocks steal his salt. 'But what is it?' asked Raisalpariha. 'Taste it and see,' said the other.

Raisalpariha tested the salt and found it so good that he said, 'Show me where you got this and I will give you half my bullocks.' They went back together to the lake, and Raisalpariha threw away his oil-seed and loaded his bullocks with salt. He gave six score of them to the old man, and together they sold salt throughout the world.

38

JHORIA

Chikanput, Koraput District

Dhuli Nagin lived in the Under World. She had a daughter named Kansa Nagin. When the time for the girl's marriage came, she cleaned the dirt from her body with yellow turmeric and with sand from the underground river. Dhuli Nagin said, 'Take this dirt to Kachhu Raja's country and throw it away there in some place where men and cattle do not come.' That night seven young cobra girls carried the dirt to Kachhu Raja's country and threw it away.

Kansa Nagin's marriage began and lasted seven days. After the girl had gone to her father-in-law's house, Dhuli Nagin had a dream that fire had broken out in all the places where the dirt had been thrown away. Next morning she went to see and found that a rat had carried the dirt up through its hole to the Middle World. She followed the rat's footprints and found the dirt piled up in a heap outside the hole. She said, 'Since this dirt had been carried up from below to the world of men, they will use it and will call it "salt".'

Presently a Gadaba came by and found the salt. He ate it and liked the taste and introduced it to the world.

39

KOND

Totaguda, Koraput District

Seven years after the new earth and clouds were made, the Earth and Sky were to be married. But fire was needed to light the marriage-lamp. The Sun and Moon were Guru and Gurumai of the marriage. The Sun went to get fire but could not find any. So he took some oil and a wick in his left hand and squeezed it so hard that a spark of fire flew out and lit the lamp.

The marriage began and the Earth and Sky went round the pole. Then they sat down and ate some rice and pulse cooked together. What was left they buried in a pit near the booth, and the visitors went home.

Presently some potters came to the place and made a settlement there. To make their pots they dug for earth and soon brought up the buried rice. By now it had turned into salt. They ate a little and found it tasted good. Daily they tasted it and soon formed the habit of eating it at every meal. The potters began to sell it from village to village, and the custom spread through the world.

40

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

One day Nirantali took Paramugatti to a place called Eranaru-eragadda. They left it and went right round the world. When they were returning home they drew near Eranaru-eragadda. There from below the ground they found salt coming up and spreading around. In the rays of the sun the salt looked clean and bright.

Nirantali asked Paramugatti, 'What is this?' Nirantali picked some up and examined it. She said to Paramugatti, 'This is salt.' Paramugatti said, 'What can be done with it?' 'This will be good for men to eat.' They took some of the salt home and Paramugatti gave men a little and gradually they learnt to eat it and to like the taste.

41

MURIA

Siunaguda, Koraput District

In Bimorguda lived a Gour and his wife; they had one son. They also had a cow which the Gour milked. He sold the milk and when he had got a little money, he went to get a wife for his son. He found a girl and the son married her. After the marriage the parents went on hawking their milk from village to village, and the son and daughter-in-law stayed at home.

The first bazaar ever to be held was at Ratanpur, and people came from miles around to see it. The Gour and his wife, of course, took their milk to the bazaar and sold it. Another day the Gour went away somewhere, leaving his wife at home. She took curds and milk on the bazaar day to Ratanpur, but as she went she met a snake and it bit her. She staggered on but when the poison reached her head she fell down and died. Her pot broke and the milk was spilt. The snake came and smelt it. By its sniffing, the milk and curd was poisoned.

That evening when people were returning from the bazaar, they saw the milk and curds and some of them picked it up and put it in their mouths. The poison had made it salty. The people liked it and each took some home and in the evening ate it with their food and slept heavily after it. They said, 'This stuff gives good sleep. We must always have it.' Where the woman died was the first salt-pit.

42

PARENGA

Dumriput, Koraput District

Long ago Ispur Mahaprabhu and Dharmo Deota brought all the gods to Kalinga-land. There, sitting on the bank of a lake, they held a meeting. For though Ispur had made men, there was something wrong with them; they had thorns in their tongues. 'How are we to get rid of the thorns?' asked Ispur. One said one thing, and one another, until at last Ranagundi Deota said, 'I have a fruit; if I throw it into the lake its seed will turn into

salt.' Now this fruit was the papaya. He threw it into the lake and its seed turned into salt.

The gods went away and after a time merchants came to the lake and camped there. The bullocks began licking the salt on the bank. The merchants were afraid that they would die, and they tasted it and found it sweet. They thought nothing of it and went their way. Seeing this, Dharmo Deota's daughter thought, 'Here is salt, but it is sweet, and no one wants it.' So she pissed on it and it became real salt. When the merchants passed that way again, they found the salt was tasty and they loaded it onto their bullocks and took it to sell. Once men began to eat salt, the thorns soon came out of their tongues.

43

HILL SAORA

Maneba, Ganjam District

Raja Gehil was a good and generous Raja. He ruled in Manigarh. If anyone wanted meat for dinner and could not get any, the Raja would cut off a bit of his own body and give it to him. When the Raja died his corpse was taken to Kunda Hill and buried. A few days after his death the world sank below the waters and his bones were mingled with the waters. When the world was formed again, a rat ate some of the bones and took them to the surface. When the sun shone on the rat's excreta, it looked like silver in the bright light.

One day while a Saora was going for wood to the jungle, he saw the silvery stuff and tasted it. He liked it and that night the ghost of the Raja came to him in a dream and said, 'What you ate was all that is left of my bones. It is salt. Take it home and use it every day in your food.' The next day the Saora collected it and took it home. He kept some for himself and sold the rest.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FIRMAMENT

1

BONDO

Rasbeda, Koraput District

Men used to be so small that if they wanted to pick a brinjal they had to put a ladder against the plant. The sky was very near the earth. One day an old woman was sweeping her court and her back brushed against a cloud. She was angry and hit it with her broom and the sky went up, out of the way. Then men began to grow, for there was room for them.[1]

2

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

At the beginning, the ears of the fowl were as large as threshing-floors. Men and gods lived on the earth, but there was nowhere for Indra, who had to live in the Under World. As a result there was no rain, and one day men went to Rumrok and begged him to give Indra somewhere to live in the sky so that he would be able to send them rain.

Rumrok did not know what to do, but after thinking a lot he went to Nitmani Hill to see Songanja the golden cock which had a pair of enormous silver ears. 'Surely these ears,' said Rumrok, 'must be very tiresome, for they are far too big. Give them to me and I will turn them into clouds and spread them over the sky and your name will live for ever.' The cock liked the idea and removed its ears and two of its toes. Rumrok put the two toes and a couple of wooden pillars as supports and spread the clouds upon them like a tent.

The cock went to Indra and presently there was a strong wind which caught its wings and Indra jumped on its back

[1] The idea of the original proximity of earth and heaven is widely distributed and goes back to the antiquity of Vedic times. See also MMI, p. 78 ff.

and they were carried up into the sky and Indra was able to make his home on the clouds.

Indra was very pleased with the cock and blessed it. 'When I get up early in the morning and cough, you alone will hear me, and you must crow loudly to let the world know that the dawn is coming.'

3

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

The twelve Gadaba brothers ate nothing but meat. One day, when they were out hunting, they came to Iskindaban. An Asurin was living in this forest; her name was Tarki. When she saw the brothers she attacked them, for she was hungry. They fought her with their bows and arrows and after a long battle killed her.

When Tarki fell to the ground, her body looked like a great hill. The twelve brothers thought, 'If we leave her like this, many children may come out of her belly, and they will devour us. We had better burn her.' They collected an enormous quantity of wood and piled it round her. When they lit the pyre, the smoke of it went into the sky and made the whole world dark. This smoke became the clouds which still darken the world.

4

GADABA

Alsidusra, Koraput District

In Manjalgarh lived twenty-one Kond brothers. They had twenty-one sons. Each had two wives. When all the sons were married, one day the twenty-one fathers went for a funerary ceremony to the house of the father-in-law of the youngest boy. For three days they stayed there and then came home. Their host had given three loads of gruel and five loads of rice and a bullock so that they should not want on the journey.

As they went along, the eldest brother got very hungry and decided to kill the bullock. When he suggested this to the others,

they agreed. They put all their things under a tree, and killed the bullock and cut it up. But they had no vessels to cook with.

So two of the brothers went to the potter at Kolangput and brought two big pots from him. They collected some big stones for the hearth. They put three cartloads of wood and made a great fire. They filled the pots with meat and put them on the fire.

As the meat was cooking, the steam and smoke went up into the air and the water bubbled over, for they had no means of closing the mouth of the pot. The water went right up into the sky, carrying bits of meat with it. The water and the steam became clouds and the meat turned into stars.

5

GADABA

Siliyamunda, Koraput District

When the old wife of Jhaliya Gadaba died at Gurukot after marrying off the last of her five sons, the people gathered for the tenth-day ceremonies. They drank and danced till very late at night. That day they had killed a cow and had stretched out the skin to dry. While they were dancing and making merry, Jhaliya picked up the skin and threw it in fun over his friends as they sat drinking. They shook it off and it flew up into the air. Up and up it went until it was spread out like an umbrella above them. From the earth, the inside of the skin appeared white and shining. This was the first cloud.

6

KOND

Kesaraguda, Ganjam District

There was no sky at first. When men increased in number, the gods assembled and said, 'It is not good for us to live on earth with men, for now there are so many of them they will give us a lot of trouble. Let us make a sky where we can find some comfort.' But some of them said, 'What are we to make

the sky of? Bura Pinnu said, 'Let everyone take a little dirt from his body and make clouds.' So each god took dirt from his body and dust from his right foot and they dug a hole in the ground and mixed the dirt in it with water. They covered it and left it for seven days. The mud turned into iron and lead: there was none before.

Bura Pinnu made two Lohar brothers—Mukutera and Kanutera—and told them to make the sky of lead and support it on four pillars of iron. The Lohars put the pillars in place and spread the great lead plate like a roof above it. The gods were pleased and told the Lohar brothers to live on iron henceforward. Then the gods went to live in the sky.

7

KOND

Sikerguda, Kalahandi District

Long ago, when men died, the neighbours used to bury them. Pijju-Bibenj was up in the sky. He said to Nirantali, 'When people die, I do not see any bones or ashes: why not?' Nirantali said, 'Because we bury them in the ground.' Pijju-Bibenj said, 'Very well, then, we'll burn them.'

So next time somebody died they got a lot of wood and prepared to burn the corpse but it would not catch. Nirantali blew on it; her breath was like steam. It went into the wood, and made a lot of smoke which went up and up into the sky. Nirantali said to Pijju-Bibenj, 'This is smoke from a burning body: keep it separate from the smoke that rises from the forest-clearings or hearths in the house. When it is time for the rains, let this smoke out and we'll know it's a rain-cloud.' Since then Pijju-Bibenj has kept this smoke in a special house.

8

KUTTIA KOND

Borga, Ganjam District

The Moon lived in the sky. She used to eat pulse and rice. When she went hunting she took her servants and soldiers with

her. She had a god; she used to go alone into her temple; she would shut the door and offer sacrifice. She used to stay behind in the temple and send her servants for the hunt. When they came back, they would put any animal they had killed on the threshold. They would open the belly and remove the liver and kidneys and roast them. The smoke from the fire rose up and turned into clouds.

When they roast a goat's skin the cloud turns black; when they roast a sambhar the cloud is blue.

9

KUTTIA KOND

Borga, Ganjam District

Formerly the sky was very near the earth and everyone found it most troublesome. When the sun set it was so dark that people could not get about. When the sun rose it was so close that many died of the heat.

At last men and animals went to Nirantali and told her how dark and hot it was and how their heads brushed against the sky all the time. Nirantali called Paja Jani, whose business it was to worship the Earth, and asked him what to do. Paja Jani said, 'I will go into the sky and pull it up.' Nirantali said, 'Don't go into the sky, but put it on your head and lift it up that way.' Paja Jani said, 'No, I'll take my children with me and we'll go into the sky. We won't stay here.' Nirantali said, 'Well, go into the sky and put the sun on your head and I promise you that here men will sacrifice in your name. When the sky hides in the clouds and we are cold, we'll sacrifice for you and you must make the sun shine again.'

Raja Jani sat on a chair and spreading out his arms put the sun on his head.

10

MURIA

Barhaguda, Koraput District

Formerly the sky was close to the earth. Men and animals

were small. On Bharangkul Hill there was a great *sāja* tree; it had a hollow from which came two little babies—Ol Raja and Ol Rani. The snake and the tiger came to look after them. The snake gave them milk and the tiger played with them. Time passed but the snake and tiger never let the babies stand up; they always made them lie in their arms.

But when the children were fully grown, they slept together and when the Raja sat for the work his head struck against the sky. The snake and the tiger saw what had happened and ran away. Ol Raja was angry because he had hit his head and with his Rani's help he pushed the sky higher up. The earth went down and the sky went up and now there was room for men to grow and move about.

But the effort of pushing up the sky was too great for Ol Raja and Ol Rani and they fell down and died.

11

HILL SAORA

Bungding, Koraput District

One day Dumru Saora went with his wife to the Kumanpani bazaar. A merchant employed them as his servants and they stayed with him for a long time. But when a son was born they decided to return to their home. On the way they prepared wheat-flour but they did not wait to cook it, and they were very hungry when they reached their house. There nothing was ready and the wife had to clean the hearth, get firewood and make a fire, fetch water, tend to the child and it was a long time before the bread was cooked. Dumru was tired and lost his temper, and when his wife brought the food he threw it away. The bread flew up into the sky and stuck there as a cloud. Some embers from the hearth were on it and these turned into stars.

12

HILL SAORA

Samgainta, Ganjam District

At first the clouds cast shadows on the earth. Men were born

and lived on earth and when they increased in number, they made their first bazaar at Rungebani. People came from all sides to see it and bought tobacco, salt, cattle and joyfully took their things home. One day the son of Gunso, the headman of Kujusingi and the watchman and four others set off to the bazaar. As they went, night fell; they rested and next morning continued their journey; by midday they reached a river and prepared their food on the bank. Gunsu's son had a gourd with him. He broke it in half and cooked one part and gave the other part to the watchman. The watchman put it on a stump there, thinking he would cook on the way back, and for that day he took some of his friend's food.

When they had finished their meal they went on but when they looked back they saw the gourd rising into the sky and spreading like an umbrella over the earth. From below the wind blew it up and up until it filled the whole sky. Now there was a pleasant shadow over the world and the friends finished their journey in comfort.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SUN AND MOON

The Sun and Moon

1

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

Kutti Manjhi, a Bhattra, lived in Barathgarh. There were only a few people then and they did not have to do much work, they just sowed a few grains in the fields.

Kutti Manjhi cut the jungle, made a garden and sowed maize. When it was ready he sent his son and daughter-in-law to watch at night. But the Moon came and stole maize from the garden.

In the morning Kutti Manjhi saw what had happened and abused his son; next night he went himself to watch and lit a fire below his platform. After he had gone to sleep, the Moon came at midnight, and picked the maize.

Kutti Manjhi awoke and came down, picked up a blazing log and beat the Moon till its body was burnt all over. It ran away, its body covered with burns which may still be seen.

2

BHUIYA

Uskuda (Bonai), Sundargarh District

Men were made, but the world was dark. Basuki wondered in her mind how they could live in such darkness. In her own eyes there was light and they reflected everything she saw. From her eyes she removed the light; she took a boy from the right eye and a girl from the left. The girl's light was weaker. Basuki Mata thought, 'These are the children of light; how can they marry others? They must marry each other.'

They married and had many children. But the children always played with their mother, not one of them loved the

father, and only two looked like him. When he saw this the father was angry and said, 'I won't live with this girl; she has been to some other man and that is why the children don't look like me.' Full of anger he left her and ever since they have lived separately.

But once a month they remember each other. As the husband sits down for his supper the wife comes to him. He leaves his food and tries to catch her. But she turns red to show that she is in her period. The reddening of the moon is her period.

3

BINJHWAR

Nangmunda, Sambalpur District

When men were born in the Red Age, there was no light in the world and all living creatures were in misery. One day Mahadeo and Mahaprabhu came to tour the world and when they saw the darkness they felt sad and went home. They wondered how to make light, but they could not think of any method, so they called the gods to a meeting.

Among them came Barul Deo, Baghya and Sembyi. Baghya said, 'If any child is born with his eyes closed he can give light.' They went to find such a child, but without success.

On his hill Maha Muni sat below a banyan doing penance. He shut his eyes for twelve years. One day he pissed and his seed fell with it. A black she-antelope came from Singaldip and licked the wet earth and conceived. She bore a son and ran away. The child lived on the banyan milk, but one day a drop of it fell on his eyes and closed them. The gods found him and took him to Mahadeo. He bathed the child's eyes for twenty-one days in warm water. The right eye was cleaned but not the left. The boy opened his right eye and all the earth was light and Maha Muni said, 'You are Raja of the sky, give light to all.' The boy went into the sky as the Sun.

4

BINJHWAR

Garbhona, Sambalpur District

On Binjhigir Hill lived Kechkecha Binjhwar. He had seven daughters and, youngest of all, a little son. The seven girls were married but the boy was not.

The father went to find a girl for him and met a Binjhwar of Basingarh who had a daughter. They discussed the bride-price and, when everything was settled, began the marriage ceremony. Kechkecha's daughters acted as bridesmaids.

When the marriage party went to Basingarh they were welcomed and feasted and at night the ceremonies began. Next day the Basingarh Binjhwar feasted the party again and sent them back to the groom's house where they continued the marriage. In time the brass dish in which the visitors washed the feet of the couple was filled with water and they picked up bride and groom and took them into the house. The bridesmaids picked up the dish and threw the water onto the roof; as they threw it the dish slipped from their hands and went up into the sky. It stuck there as the Moon and filled the world with light.

5

BINJHWAR

Padhanpali, Sambalpur District

At first there was neither earth nor sky; there was nothing but water everywhere. The gods lived in the wind. One day they assembled and from the dirt of their bodies made the earth and prepared the sky. Then men were born and gradually increased in number. They were very clever at carpentry.

Mahadeo, Mahaprabhu, Bal and Sugriv, these four gods, divided men into castes. When that was done they called them all to a council. There was no moon and not a single star then and at night it was very dark, so dark that the gods felt very bad and stopped the council. They called a Sonar to make a lamp. He went into the sky and set up his shop there and made a lamp of silver and set it among the clouds. Mahadeo

took some fat from his left side and took it to a Teli to have it made into oil. He put it in the lamp and lit it and the sky was filled with light. Now men were able to hold their council and decided what work each caste should do. After they returned the gods thought, 'Suppose someone blows this lamp out, people will laugh at us.' Mahadeo and Sugriv blessed the lamp, saying, 'Burn by night: go out by day.'

6

BINJHWAR

Bangrapani, Sambalpur District

When the Sun's children were born, the god-people thought, 'Even when the Sun was by himself, he was hot enough. If these children are allowed to grow up, the world will become so hot that nothing will survive. Men and animals, trees and grass will turn to ashes. If we would save the world, we must somehow or other kill these children.'

The god-people went to the Moon and said, 'Invite the Sun to dinner and prepare for him a sweet potato. Tell him how good and tasty it is and, when he asks what it is made of, say it is the flesh of your own children whom you killed for his entertainment. Tell him also that you have the bones of your children somewhere and that, when you get lonely for them, all you have to do is to sprinkle some water over them and they'll come back to life.'

The Moon did as the god-people suggested, and the Sun enjoyed his dinner and thought how clever the Moon was. Some days later he felt very hungry and remembered the excellent dish his sister had prepared. He therefore killed all his own children, carefully putting the bones aside, and made a heavy meal. But he soon grew desolate in his empty house and went to the bones and threw water over them. But the bones remained still and lifeless. Then the Sun realized how he had been cheated and went to beat the Moon, but she escaped in time.

The Sun stood on the threshold and cursed his sister. 'It would be sinful for me to injure my nephews. But as I have suffered, so you will suffer.'

The Sun's children became ghosts and every now and then they come to kidnap their mother, and this is what we call an eclipse.

7

GADABA

Chikanput, Koraput District

In the Maiman forest Jaku Gadaba lived with his wife for many years, but they had no children, until at last when Jaku's wife was an old woman she conceived. She went to her parents' house and gave birth to a son there. The boy grew up and they planned his marriage. When the day came, the old woman washed her clothes and spread them out to dry, but in the excitement she forgot about them and left them there.

After dark, the visitors were sitting round the fire, talking and drinking. As the clothes hung on the fence they shone in the light and Jaku thought there was a fire and brought water to throw on them. But the old woman ran to save them.

The clothes were blowing a little in the wind, then suddenly a great gust came and took them right up into the sky. The old woman followed half way to the clouds. She caught the lower cloth and brought it down, but the other went right up and became the moon, which is red and brown like Gadaba cloth. When she came down to earth, the old woman danced with pleasure singing, 'Today the moon is born from my cloth and the cloth will give light to the world.'

8

JHORIA

Kerba, Koraput District

Somru Jhoria had a very beautiful daughter. Her name was Sonwari. She was unmarried. In those days there was no sun in the sky; the world lived in darkness. Sonwari used to wear golden rings in her ears. When she was married she went to her husband's house.

One day while she was drawing water a great kite swooped

down and snatched one of the golden ornaments from her ear. It flew up up into the sky but was caught in the great spider's web that stretches across the heavens. The girl ran weeping home. Her father-in-law consoled her saying, 'Your golden ornament will become the sun in the sky and all the world will be lightened by it. So do not weep.'

In this way the sun came into being.

9

JUANG

Balipal, Keonjhar District

Rusi made the Sun from a *sarai* tree and the Moon of sandalwood. He bathed naked before dawn and sacrificed a cock before it crowed. Life came to the Sun and Moon and they went into the sky. The shavings of the sandalwood are the stars.

10

JUANG

Tambur (Pal Lahara), Dhenkanal District

In the old days, before there was a Sun or Moon, Bhagavan used to go every day to visit Rusi and Rusain. But whenever he said, 'When did I come last?' they used to answer 'Today'. For there was no record of 'days' or 'yesterdays'; it was always 'today'. Bhagavan thought in his mind, 'How shall I create "tomorrow" and "yesterday"?'

Bhagavan had a son and daughter; they were the Sun and Moon. But they lived at home, they did not work in those days, Rusi and Rusain too had a son and daughter. Bhagavan wanted to marry his son to Rusi's daughter. But when the boy went to the house he was so strong and shining that Rusain was afraid and hid the girl. Then Bhagavan sent his daughter, the Moon, and in the dark she met her own brother, the Sun, and married him, but she went to live with Rusi. When Bhagavan's son at last saw Rusi's daughter he was filled with love for her. When the Moon heard about it, she told the Sun that he was her husband and quarrelled with him. The Sun was angry and cut

off the Moon's head; she ran weeping to Bhagavan and told him what had happened. Bhagavan went to Rusi and said, 'When did this happen?' Instead of saying 'Today' as usual, Rusi this time said, 'Yesterday'. Bhagavan was pleased and put the Moon's head on again. But he said, 'You two, husband and wife, are always quarrelling, so you must live apart.'

11

KOYA

Tondapali, Koraput District

Men tilled their fields and sowed every kind of seed. One day Bhima came and saw their fields and returned to Deur. He said to Deur, 'Men are tilling their fields: I too want to cultivate. Give me seed and I'll prepare a field and give you half the crop. Deur said, 'What seed do you want?' Bhima said, 'I don't want the kind of seed men are using. I want golden seed.' So Deur gave him golden seed and Bhima took it to a stream and, ploughing with his teeth, made a field nearby and sowed the golden seed. When it grew, he reaped and gathered it, then threshed and winnowed. He told Deur to bring a wooden measure and take his share. This Deur did. Bhima said, 'How can we measure gold in a wooden measure? Bring a silver measure for the golden seed.' Deur went home and had a silver measure made. When they were dividing the grain, Deur said, 'What will you do with your share?' 'I'll give mine to men and they too can grow gold.' But Deur thought, 'This will never do: if men become rich they will take no notice of anyone.' So he measured his share and Bhima measured his, but Deur knocked the measure out of his hand, and caught it himself and went up up into the sky. He trampled the gold underfoot so that it went deep into the ground, while the measure went into the sky.

As a measure is sometimes full, sometimes empty, so is the moon sometimes large and sometimes small.

12

KONDA DORA

Sarsopodro, Koraput District

When the earth sank down and the waters rose up, and a new world was formed, there was darkness everywhere. At that time Thakurani lived at Jumukpur; she had a son and daughter. Their bodies shone so brightly that they lit up all Jumukpur.

Bhim Raja sent a kite to find light for the world. It flew round and round, but there was darkness everywhere. But on its way home it saw the shining city of Jumukpur. It sat quietly on a tree to watch. The boy and girl were playing in front of their house: when they went indoors all was dark again. The kite went back to Bhim Raja and told him what it had seen.

Bhim Raja went to Thakurani and fell at her feet. She said, 'What is your trouble: tell me.' Bhim Raja said, 'I want your son and daughter to give light to the whole world.' Thakurani gave him the children and Bhim Raja set them in the sky and blessed them, the boy to be Raja of the day, the girl to be Rani of the night.

So the brother and sister wander over the sky and all the world is full of light.

13

KOND

Kesaraguda, Ganjam District

Formerly it was always dark at night; light only came when the Sun got up. Engrada Kond and Bataroli his wife were very wealthy but they had no children. Bataroli had an affair with another Kond. This was not difficult, for at night Engrada and Bataroli used to sleep in separate houses. When Engrada came to his wife, the other Kond would creep out and sit nearby and the husband could not see him for the dark. Then when Engrada left, the two lovers slept together. For this reason Bataroli loved the dark. But Engrada hated it, for he was always anxious about his wealth.

One day Engrada said to Bataroli, 'Let's go to Bura Pinnu

and ask him to remedy this darkness everywhere.' Bataroli did not like this but she could not very well object, so they both went to Bura Pinnu and he took them to his house and made them sit down and asked Engrada what the news was. Engrada complained about the dark and begged him to make the nights lighter. Bura Pinnu said, 'Very well, there will be light at night.' But Bataroli caught his feet and said, 'But if it is always light, how will children be born and how will people work?' Bura Pinnu said, 'Then what will you have ?' She said, 'Let half the nights be dark and half light.' Bura Pinnu gave fifteen light nights to Engrada and sixteen dark nights to Bataroli. That is why some nights are light and others dark.

14

KOND

Meriahpatta, Koraput District

The Moon is the eldest daughter of Bura Pinnu and Pusruli, and the stars are their other children.

15

KOND

Meriahpatta, Koraput District

In the old days the Sun in the form of a black cow used to go round and round the world during the night. Once a Kond was out trying to steal something and he caught the cow and took it home. After that there was nothing but darkness until he let it go. Now if we see a black cow at night we leave it alone.[1]

16

KUTTIA KOND

Jarighati, Ganjam District

When the new world was ready, men were scattered all over it.

[1] A similar story is known to the Bondos on the opposite side of the District. See my *Bondo Highlander,* p. 140.

Tillopanga Kond and his wife went to Jambul Hill and built a house and lived there.

Two years afterwards Sukali Manjhi of Pimpaguda gave his daughter as junior wife to Tillopanga. The two women lived together for five years, then the younger wife conceived and when her time came gave birth to a girl and after that to five sons.

In those days there was no Moon. One day the girl was cleaning the hair of the youngest boy and when they saw it the other brothers asked her to clean their hair also. This she did for four brothers, but the fifth remained dirty. When his time came the girl sharpened her razor on her foot and accidentally cut off four fingersbreadth of the skin. In her pain, she threw it up into the sky and said, ' Let my skin become the Moon and give light to the entire world.' The skin went *jak-jak-jak* through the clouds and stayed there.

As a woman has a period, so does the Moon. For fifteen days she is hidden and on the first day she appears blood may be seen on her body.

17

KUTTIA KOND

Borga, Ganjam District

Originally the Moon looked as big as a mat. At that time, it was so hot that rocks split in two and men and cattle died. The people went to Bura Pinnu and said, 'If the Moon continues as big as this no one will be left alive.' Bura Pinnu said, 'I'll beat the Moon and knock her out of the ground so she won't be able to get up again.' Then the people said, 'But if Bura Pinnu kills the Moon it will be dark and we won't be able to get about. Don't kill her,' they said, 'but cut her in half.' Bura Pinnu called the Moon but she hid somewhere. So Paja Jani caught her by the hair and dragged her out but her hair came away in his hands. Each hair turned into a star.

Bura Pinnu said to the Moon, 'Don't be afraid: I won't kill you, I just want to cut off a bit of you so that you won't destroy mankind by being too hot.'

18

KUTTIA KOND

Deogarh, Ganjam District

Leopards, tigers, hyenas, all the meat-eating caste of animals, took counsel how to catch their prey, for they were afraid to come out by day and at night they could not see, for there was no moon. They went to Nirantali and said, 'You've made a light for human beings: what about us?' Nirantali said, 'I can't make a special light for you. For that you must go to Sonu-aru and Rupa-aru. They will make you something.'

So the animals went to Sonu-aru and Rupa-aru. Sonu-aru had a very beautiful daughter and the whole world was in love with her. Rupa-aru said to her, 'All these men are in love with you: how will you be able to choose one of them? Go to the sky and at night display your mirror and people will love and honour you even more. If you live here, people will only quarrel over you.'

The girl went to live in the sky, where all can see her and so there is no jealousy and the meat-eaters can take their food by the light of her mirror.

19

KUTTIA KOND

Borgaon, Ganjam District

Nirantali made a great feast and sacrificed a buffalo. She gave turbans to Patros, Paiks and other important people.[1] But when the Moon came, Nirantali did not give her a turban and the Moon wept. She thought, 'If men can get turbans, why can't I?'

The others went home, and so did the Moon, but after a few days she returned to Nirantali weeping, 'You tied a turban for everyone, why not for me?' Nirantali said, 'Give me a feast and I'll give you a turban.' The Moon went home and returned with liquor, grain and buffaloes. The guests assembled and Nirantali put a gold ornament on the Moon's forehead and a baby hare in

[1] It used to be customary for Governors to present turbans to Hindu and tribal leaders at the annual *bhet* or palaver.

her lap. She said, 'Keep this hare in your lap, feed it and play with it. At full moon, when you grow in size, all will see the mark on your forehead and the hare in your lap.'

The Sun, seeing this, also came demanding a turban, but Nirantali said, 'I've no turban left, but here is a golden crown.' The Sun's rays come from this crown.

20

KUTTIA KOND

Deogarh, Ganjam District

Nirantali and Paramugatti created men and animals, but it was dark—there was no Sun or Moon. Nirantali said, 'We've made all these things, but they have to stay in the dark: how can we make light?' They could not think of any way of getting light, so Nirantali went up into the sky.

There was a golden stone and Nirantali ground it to powder. There was a tank nearby, on the bank of which lived Pijju-Bibenj. Nirantali set fire to the powdered stone and when it blazed up brightly she threw water over it and put it out. She thought, 'This is the way to do it. When I set fire to the stone, it will be day: when I put it out, it will be night.' Pijju-Bibenj told Nirantali to do this every day.

21

KUTTIA KOND

Surangbaro, Ganjam District

At first when the earth was made and men were born, all the world was dark and human beings were in great distress. Kapantali brought some white earth, mixed it with oil and made a mirror and threw it up into the air. From this seven Suns and seven Moons were created and filled the world full of light. But so strong was the fire of the Suns that the whole world was burnt. Men and animals were burnt.

Nirantali and Paramugatti called the Moons and Nirantali caught six of them and put them in the bun of her hair. She called

the Suns and said, 'I've eaten six of the Moons, let me eat six of you.' She ate them and only one was left. Then Nirantali buried the six Moons in the ground. Since then there has been one Moon and one Sun.

22

MURIA

Barhaguda, Koraput District

At first there was no Sun and no Moon. Men found that living always in the dark was very troublesome. So Mahaprabhu made the Sun and Moon and told them to divide the work of giving light.

The Sun got very tired of doing this and went to Mahaprabhu to complain and said, 'When I go down into the water I get very wet and I drip all day.'

So Mahaprabhu made him a chariot and gave him a golden umbrella and told him to sit in the chariot and cover himself with the umbrella and then he would not get wet. He provided five men to draw the chariot.

When the chariot comes up into the sky, the ribs of the umbrella can be seen. The chariot is only used to go under, not over, the sky: that is why the ribs are seen only in the morning and evening.

23

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

In the sky are Kittungs. They cook in the sky. The fire of their hearth is the light of the Sun. They warm themselves with it when it is cold. When they sleep well fed and the fire dies down, there comes the night.

Night was made so that men can go to women without embarrassment and so that they can sleep. Day is for work; that is why the day was made.

24

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

Uyungsum [the Sun] is in the sky. He has a flower, strong and beautiful, in his hair. When he wears it and goes to see the Moon the world gets very hot, for it means the Sun is on heat. When he couples with the Moon, sweat falls from his body. When he fans himself, the wind blows and the world grows cold.

25

HILL SAORA

Munisingi, Ganjam District

Gesru Saora and his wife lived together in Paddiguda for many years, but they had no child. But at last the wife conceived and when her time was complete gave birth to a child. On the twelfth day Gesru called the neighbours and sacrificed a goat in the name of the Dead. It was dark and one of the neighbours cut his finger with the knife. The blood fell on the goat's fat. Gesru was annoyed and in a fit of temper picked up the lump of fat and threw it into the sky where it stuck among the clouds. Gesru said, 'At least let the whole world see my lump of fat up in the sky.' As he spoke the lump began to shine and there was moonlight.

Even now on the Moon are the marks of the blood that fell from the Saora's hand.

26

HILL SAORA

Samgainta, Ganjam District

Kittung lived on the Gajamul Mountain. After a long time the earth was made, but everything was dark. Men went to him to beg for light. He said, 'Go and I will make light for you,' and they returned to their homes.

Kittung went to his Mahaprabhu and said, 'Men are blaming me for not giving them light; what shall I do?' His

Mahaprabhu said, 'Go and I will make light for the world and Kittung returned home. Then Mahaprabhu made the sun first and shut it up very carefully. Next day he took it out and sent it rolling through the sky from east to west. The sun was so hot that rocks split open, trees were withered and men died of heat.

When Kittung Mahaprabhu saw how men were suffering, he was angry and cursed the sun and one of its eyes burst open. The other eye was not so hot.

27

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

Long ago, when there was no fire in the world, Uyungsum had a little daughter. She used to carry the child about with her, tied to her back in a strip of cloth. She never left her alone.

Now for a long time Uyungsum got nothing to eat and grew weak with hunger. She thought in her mind, 'If this goes on and I never get any food to eat, I'll die. The only thing to do is to eat the child.'

So one day, while the child was asleep, Uyungsum cut her throat and the soul came out with the blood and fell to the ground. From it came fire and blazed up, burning the child's body. The fire flowed round the world. Uyungsum, afraid that the fire would destroy everything, swallowed the burning body of the child. This is why the sun, which formerly was only as bright as the moon, is full of fire and heat and shines brightly on the world.

ECLIPSES[1]

28

BONDO

Goyiguda, Koraput District

The Sun and Moon had borrowed from a bear and a scorpion

[1] See also story 6 of this chapter.

a lot of bamboo pins for stitching leaf-plates. They have not repaid them and whenever they can the bear or the scorpion catches one of them.

29

BONDO

Gokurapada, Koraput District

Arke the Moon and Singi the Sun were two friends. In the great ocean the three Lakshmi sisters were born, but because they were afraid of men they hid in a hollow bamboo.

A Chandal saw the bamboo and pulled it up by the roots. He took it to his house, and when he put it down in the court the three sisters came out and he took them into his house. He turned the bamboo upside down. The three sisters came out of the house and again went into the bamboo.

Men could not get grain to eat. Mahaprabhu went to find it for them. As he was searching across the hills he came to the Chandal's house. There he found two or three grains had fallen out of the bamboo and were lying on the ground. Mahaprabhu asked for the seed on loan. The Chandal said, 'Only if you can get someone to stand surety for you.' Mahaprabhu brought Singi the Sun. The Chandal said, 'Here is a length of bamboo; the grain is in it. I will bring out the grain without cutting the bamboo open. If I can do that, then you must fill a length of bamboo without cutting it open.' 'Very well,' said Mahaprabhu. But the Chandal secretly called culm-borers and they made holes in his bamboo and the grain came out. Then Mahaprabhu tried to fill his bamboo but he could not. The Chandal took a stick and went to the house of Singi and sat in the door, saying, 'Fulfil your bargain and I will let you into the house.' When he does this there is an eclipse of the Sun.

Mahaprabhu took the grain and gave it to mankind. But when the harvest was ready and they wanted to eat it, they had no plates. They wanted to make leaf-platters but they had no bamboo pins to stitch the leaves together. Again Mahaprabhu went to the Chandal and this time he took Arke the Moon as his surety. The Chandal said, 'I will lend you a green bamboo,

but you must return it exactly as it is.' He pulled a bamboo clump up by the roots and gave it to Arke to take away. But he found he could not carry it through the jungle and had to cut off the top and bottom. When the time came for repaying the debt there were no bamboos ready. So the Chandal went also to Arke's house and sat in the door. This is an eclipse of the Moon.[1]

30

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

After Rumrok had arranged the marriage of the Sun and Moon, the Sun brought his wife the Moon to live in his house and arranged a great feast in honour of the occasion. The following day the food was prepared and the household was busy making platters out of leaves. Everything was complete down to the last platter, but in this one bamboo pin was missing. So Rumrok went to a shop kept by a Chandal merchant and borrowed a pin from him. The platter was now complete and the guests sat down and were served with food.

After this Rumrok and the Sun and Moon set up house together, but after a few years Rumrok had a quarrel with the Sun and went to live separately. One day the merchant went to Rumrok and demanded the return of the bamboo pin which he had lent him. But Rumrok said, 'I have no longer any responsibility for the debts of those two who are now living apart from me; go and get the pin from them.'

The merchant went to the Sun and Moon and the Sun produced a pin and offered it to him, but he refused it saying that with the interest that had accumulated the Sun now owed him a lakh of such pins. The Sun of course could not afford to pay so much and he sent the merchant away. The years went by and the merchant came again and again and the Sun used to hide when he saw him coming. But one day the merchant caught

[1] Other Bondo stories about eclipses, and an account of the tribe's behaviour when they occur, will be found in my *Bondo Highlander*, p. 139 f.

him and said that he would take his wife instead of the pins. The Sun refused, and the merchant tried to catch the Moon but the Sun managed to shut the door just in time. Now whenever the merchant goes to carry away the Moon, husband and wife shut up their house, only keeping a little crack of the door open so that they can peep through and see if their creditor is there.

31

KOYA

Dudimetla, Koraput District

At first there was no disease among men and no pain. When Bhima saw this, he went to Deur and said, 'Man have nothing to trouble them. They are too happy. What they need is some pain and sickness.'

Deur said, 'Go and dig a great pit and fill it with water.' Bhima did so. Deur poured some sickness-water into the pit. Deur told Bhima to call men and dip them into the pit and this would make them ill. Bhima sent the Sun and Moon to call two Koya brothers. They said, 'Bhima has made a fine new tank. Come, let's bathe there.' When they reached the place, the Sun and Moon said, 'You bathe first, we'll bathe later.' The Koyas jumped in and at once got fever. At first they just felt miserable, then they lost consciousness. Their relatives heard about it and came to take them home.

When the two Koyas recovered, they were very angry and said to the Sun and Moon, 'You deceived us and gave us all that pain. So you too will suffer. No one saw our suffering, but the whole world will see yours. Your bodies will change colour.

So now when the Sun and Moon get fever, they cover themselves with blankets and lie down. If the fever is very bad they cover themselves completely and there is a total eclipse.

32

KUTTIA KOND

Borga, Ganjam District

Nirantali had a metal pot. She broke it, powdered the metal,

mixed it with wax and made the model of a man. The man's colour was quite black. She made the head round like a pot and gave him a fat body, great hands and long nails. But the body was very soft. His buttocks were so long that they dragged behind him. When he was ready he asked Nirantali, 'What am I to eat?' Nirantali put some rice in a golden dish and gave it to him.

At the time when the man cooked his first meal, the Moon was pregnant. After cooking his food he went to bathe; while he was away the Moon stole the rice. When the man came back and found it gone, he began to beat the Moon. But the Moon said, 'Don't beat me. It's true I've eaten your rice, but now when you are hungry you can swallow me and when I go into your belly, your hunger will cease.'

So now whenever the man is hungry he swallows the Moon, then he goes to Nirantali and she says, 'Let her go and I'll give you some money. If you don't let her go, the whole world will die.'

This is why at an eclipse the Konds throw rice and offer fowls and the man lets the Moon go.

33

KUTTIA KOND

Sutaghati, Ganjam District

The Sun and the Moon were born and were given the sky as their kingdom and they ruled over it. In time they had many children but the heat of parents and children combined was so great that many people died. Moreover the children of the Sun were constantly teasing the Moon.

So one day the Moon hid her own children in the bun of her hair and told the Sun that she had eaten them in order to reduce the great heat which was giving so much trouble to the world. When the Sun heard this he killed his own children and devoured them. But the Moon took her children out from her hair and soon they were shining again in the sky. The Sun was very angry when he realized how he had been deceived and he went to the Moon to beat her. There was a great quarrel and in the end the Sun went back to his house shouting, 'After

today, you and I will never meet and if ever I do meet you I will kill you.'

Since that day, therefore, there has been enmity between the Sun and the Moon. Occasionally they do meet and then the Sun beats the Moon and ties her up and throws her into prison for a time. Sometimes, however, when the Moon has her children with her she succeeds in imprisoning the Sun instead.

34

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

Uyungsum Mahaprabhu the Sun lives with the Moon in the sky. The Sun called men, animals and birds and held a council. He said, 'It is because of me you live; if I were not here, you would die.' They said, 'True, we would die.'

The Moon said, 'No, I am the greatest. If I were not here, you would die of the Sun's heat. But I keep you cool and because of my light, tigers and bears get their food and men can go to and fro in the dark.'

The Sun said, 'Well, I'll give you a feast.' He had cattle and buffaloes killed and gave a great feast. In the Moon's belly was a child. At the beginning of the feast, but before the guests began to eat, the child in the Moon's belly cried for food. The Moon stole a little and fed it. The Sun discovered the theft and cried, 'Look, this is a woman, I am a man. Why is she eating before me? She must be fined.' But the Moon could not pay. The Sun sent the bear to collect the fine; it sat on the threshold and made the Moon dark. Later the Sun sent a tiger and its shadow made the Moon red.

35

HILL SAORA

Munisingi, Ganjam District

Chitku Saora was blind in both eyes. He had one son. They lived on the Gerulgul Mountain. One day the Sun and Moon came playing together to that jungle. On the path they found

a dead snake and took it along with them. When they came to Chitku's house, they called his son to play with them. As they played, they tied the snake round the boy's neck. The boy began to cry and ran to his father who undid the snake and threw it away. He asked the boy, 'Why did you do such a silly thing?' but he told him how it was the Sun and Moon who had tied it round his neck. Then Chitku was angry and cursed the Sun and Moon: 'You frightened my son with your snake: now a snake will come and swallow you alive. Sometimes it will swallow you altogether, sometimes only half of you.' In this way eclipses began.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE STARS

1

BHATTRA

Parsel, Koraput District

When Mahaprabhu made the Sun and Moon, brother and sister, they had many children. One day the Moon called the Sun to arrange the marriage of his eldest son and the wedding took place. The Sun went home and the boy and girl lived happily together. Then the Moon's middle son said, 'Arrange a marriage for me too.' So the Moon went to ask the Sun for a girl, but he refused to give one and the Moon went home in a temper.

The Moon thought, 'Somehow or other I'll kill all his children.' One day she hid her children somewhere and sent word to the Sun, 'I'm ill; come and see me.' When he got the message, the Sun came and found no children in the house. The Moon said, 'They bothered me so much for food and marriage that I've killed them all and thrown them away. How peaceful it is now.'

The Sun went home and killed his own children. When the Moon heard what had happened, she brought her children home. The Sun was angry and said, 'If I can catch your children, I'll kill the lot.' So the Moon told her children never to go out when the Sun was about. 'Never appear before him or he'll kill you. Only when I'm in charge of the sky, will it be safe for you to come out and play.'

2

BONDO

Bodapada, Koraput District

Tansirjo the Sun and Jonmati the Moon were two sisters. Each had many children, but Tansirjo had more. They used to live together in one house; whatever they earned they shared

together and gave equally to the children. One day the two sisters left the children at home and went to the jungle to get food. That day Jonmati got more than her sister and as she came home, she thought, 'Look how much I've brought today, yet my children will get no more because I will have to share it with Tansirjo's children.' She came quickly home before her sister, and tied up all her own children in the bun of her hair.

When Tansirjo came in, Jonmati said, 'I have burnt my face while cooking; that's why it has swelled up. And I've eaten my children. They were a great bother; we were always having to get food for them, so I've eaten them.' When Tansirjo heard that she remembered how much trouble her own children were and she felt angry and ate them all. Then Jonmati brought her children out of her hair. Tansirjo tried to bring out her children, but they were dead. There was a great quarrel and Jonmati left the house with her children. Tansirjo got so angry that she became very hot and is always burning. But the Moon grew sad and quiet without her sister and she is cold.

3

GADABA

Kajriput, Koraput District

There was a great Saora hunter named Sumro. He had neither wife nor child; he lived only for his bow and arrows. One day as he was going through the jungle he came to Kurraidongar, where two white cranes were sitting on a tree. Sumro shot at them and killed the male bird. He lit a fire under the tree and roasted it. The female sat above in the branches weeping '*Kalap-kalap*'. But when she smelt the smoke of her husband roasting she fell from the tree into the flames, and was burnt to death.

When Sumro saw this, he was moved not to eat the flesh of such great lovers, and he took the two bodies in his hands and blessed them saying, 'Go to the sky and live there as the twin stars. There you will have multitudes of children. Here your bodies were indeed white and clean, but there you will shine even more brightly. The whole world will see you there and will

admire you.' This was how stars came into the sky. The twin stars were the first and all the rest are their children.

4

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

Before the Sun was made, the clouds were so near the earth that men could not stand upright. Mahaprabhu decided to make the Sun. He left his wife Raisinghdai at home and went to Similibhata Hill. Here he found a great *bija* tree, so large that twelve men with arms outstretched could not embrace it. 'I will make the Sun out of this tree,' he decided.[1]

Mahaprabhu cut down the tree; this took him six months. And it took him another six months to trim and shape it. All this time he ate nothing. By the time he was finished, he had made a pile of chips and shavings as high as a little hill.

At the end of the year Raisinghdai grew restless. 'Whatever is Mahaprabhu doing?' she asked herself. 'Is he dead? Has a tiger eaten him?' She went to find him. After a long weary journey she came to Similibhata Hill, and in the distance heard the sound of Mahaprabhu's axe. But just as she was approaching, he decided to return home, for he was very tired, and he left the place by another path. By the time Raisinghdai arrived, her husband was gone. She knew he had been there and she thought that perhaps he was hiding from her somewhere. She searched everywhere. 'Perhaps he is underneath this pile of chips and shavings,' she thought. She threw them aside, digging amongst them in her attempt to find Mahaprabhu. They flew up into the sky and became stars.

5

JUANG

Balipal, Keonjhar District

When a man is hanged—whether he hangs himself or is

[1] The Murias also have a legend that the Sun was made by Lingo and his brothers out of a great tree. See my *The Muria and their Ghotul*, p 259.

hanged in jail—his soul goes to Mahaprabhu with a cord round its neck. Mahaprabhu says, 'I don't want rascals like you in my house,' and throws him away. He turns into a ghost and he can be seen as a falling star, going down with the cord round his neck trailing behind him.

6

KOYA

Sikpalli, Koraput District

There were forty Koya households in a village: the place grew and grew till it was very large. There were many boys and girls, and they learnt to dance and did dance every night. Hearing the noise people used to come from neighbouring villages to watch and thus other boys and girls began to dance and soon they were dancing in every village.

But Deur was annoyed by the shouting and laughter. One day the Chief was arranging his son's marriage. He told the boys and girls that at the wedding they must dance all night. After the feast therefore they assembled and danced. The shaman's daughter was the cleverest of all the dancers. That night, with peacock's feathers in her hand, she was dancing beautifully and the people watched her with delight. Deur turned one of his chaprasis into a cockroach and sent it to watch. Presently it jumped onto the peacock's feathers and bit by bit cut out the eyes. These were blown by the wind to Deur and he stuck them one by one all over the sky.

But when the feathers were spoilt, the girl's dance was spoilt. She stopped and sat down to see what had happened, but the cockroach flew away and escaped. The girl looked up and there were her bright feathers in the sky. The cockroach-chaprasi said, 'Now your feathers are spoilt and Deur has turned them into stars.' Because the girl danced at night, stars shine at night.

7

KOYA

Tondapali, Koraput District

Even after the world was made and men were born, there was

no sky: gods and men lived together in one place. But one day the gods got together and said, 'This living with human beings is very troublesome. Let's make some place up above, where men can't reach us.' So they made the sky. But when it was new, it was wet, so the gods did not go there.

In Ankalgarh City ruled Jagwant Raja. He had one son. He went to Murkulgarh to arrange the boy's marriage, but there was no proper road and the Raja had to get one made from his house. As the coolies made the road, they came near Murkulgarh to a hill called Sarsang on which were many great rocks. They sent for workmen from Kochamgarh who blew them apart with gunpowder and forced the road through the hill. Only one great rock remained in the way. In this they made twenty-one holes, filled them with gunpowder, and fired it all at once. There was a great explosion: the rock split, and hundreds of little red-hot bits of stone flew into the sky, up up up, till they stuck in the clouds and turned into stars.

8

KONDA DORA

Kasuguda, Koraput District

In Menagand village lived a Kond called Gunmidi. He had no children. He grew old and died. In those days the Konds used to cremate corpses standing upright. The neighbours carried Gunmidi's body to the Kopritukli Hill and burnt it. The hands and feet were consumed first, then the head. The skull broke and the brains spurted up into the sky and stuck on the clouds. Two bits of fire also shot up and stuck there. When the people saw them, they shouted '*Hukka,* stars!' From that day we stopped burning our corpses standing up. The bits of fire became the morning and the evening stars.

9

KOND

Kerma, Koraput District

The Moon's husband is Mahaprabhu and the stars are their

children. It was through seeing the Moon gather all her stars around her that we got the idea of making dormitories where boys and girls could sleep.

10

KOND

Koklanga, Ganjam District

In Irpiguda there were many Konds and their headman was called Sukli. He had seven sons, all married and living separately. Two years after the youngest was married, Sukli died and his sons performed the funeral rites. There were no stars at that time. A year after Sukli's death there was an epidemic in the village and many of the people left it. All the seven sons and their wives, except the youngest son's wife, died. In time everybody left the village or died except this one girl who refused to go away. She had a pet peacock to keep her company in the house.

One day at midday the girl lay asleep with her clothes undone. The peacock saw her and mounted her; she woke but did not repulse it, for the two loved each other greatly. After a time the girl laid two eggs—one was one-and-a-half cubits long and the other two-and-a-half cubits long. From the big egg was born Begabadori, the morning star; from the small egg Barahasukhan, the evening star. Bura Pinnu saw no place for them on earth and sent them into the sky. They had many children and filled the sky with stars.

11

KUTTIA KOND

Charganna, Ganjam District

In Saphaganna, Nirantali made the Sun and Moon and sent them into the sky. They had many children. The Moon had many more and the Sun used to catch them and kill and eat them. When they all were dead, the Moon went weeping to Nirantali.

Nirantali went to Saphaganna and said, 'You two mustn't live together. You get up in the day and the Moon will get up in

the night.' Nirantali said to the Moon, 'I'll give you as many children as you had before.' That night Nirantali prepared parched grain, put it in a winnowing-fan and, standing on a level place in front of the house, threw it up into the sky.

It went up and turned into stars and the Moon cared for them as her children.

12

KUTTIA KOND

Sikabaru, Ganjam District

When the world was made, there was nothing to cover it. Nirantali thought, 'If we don't cover the world, someone will steal it or a tiger will eat it.' So she called Binjabari and Loharbari, the two blacksmiths, and asked them to make some sort of cover for the world. They went to find iron, and after a long time got it near Bilamal, for Nirantali had excreted there and the mess had turned into iron. They brought it to their smithies and made a great pan and four pillars. They set up the pillars in the four corners of the world and laid the pan upon them. Then Nirantali made the Moon and Sun, but they did not look nice by themselves. So she got handfuls of eight-anna and four-anna pieces and threw them into the sky and they turned into stars.

13

MURIA

Barhaguda, Koraput District

When men increased in number, they began to fall ill and die. In those days they used to take a three days' supply of rice and pulse to feed the corpses in the very places where they buried them. The ghosts made vessels of leaves and cooked and ate their food. But after the funerary rites of the Dassa, the Dead got no more food and they wandered about hungry and in great misery.

One day many ghosts gathered and said, 'Let's go to Jam Deota and ask him to make proper arrangements for our food.' They did so and said, 'We are always hungry, for our relatives

only give us food for three days. Make some arrangement for us.' Jam Deota gave them a small earthen pot and pulse and rice and said, 'Don't go down to the earth, but stay here and cook and eat.' The ghosts cooked in the sky, but what with the heat of their fire and the heat of the sun, it became unbearably hot below and houses and trees caught fire. The people were frightened and ran to Jam Deota and told him what was happening. Jam Deota sent word to Indra asking him to make it rain. Indra poured down the rain and this cooled things. Jam Deota then said to the ghosts. 'Only cook by night, not by day.' The stars are the fires in the hearths of the ghosts. When one of them has no fire and gets some from a friend, we see it shoot *jak-jak-jak* across the sky.

14

HILL SAORA

Talasingi, Ganjam District

The Sun and Moon were made first, but the sky was empty of stars. At Subrangiri there were eighty houses of Saoras. The Chief's name was Sahiban. This Chief had three sons; the eldest was a great lover. He used to flirt with the daughter of the shaman and she fell in love with him.

One day when the youth went to sleep in the hut in his hill-clearing to protect the crops from wild elephants and deer, the girl followed him, forgetting her fear of the night. For a long time they lay laughing and playing together and after they had finished the work of love, the boy took the wooden block[1] out of the girl's ear and threw it into the sky. It went up and up and became a star and shone dimly. The girl said, 'Where is my ear-plug?' 'It has turned into a star,' said her lover. She was proud of that and shortly afterwards the two married and their love has become famous.

[1] Saora women pierce the lobes of their ears and, in order to enlarge the hole, insert circular wooden blocks of gradually increasing diameter.

15

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

It was when men increased in number that they learnt to smoke tobacco. There was a Saora called Dipli in Tarasingi village. He had three sons, all married. One day in the eldest son's father-in-law's house there was a wedding and the boy and his wife went for it. The father-in-law invited them to drink liquor and brought out a chair for the boy to sit on. The rest of the company sat round on the floor. His wife's sister made the boy a pipe. She put some salt inside and above it a little tobacco. The boy smoked his pipe, then the salt caught fire and he blew violently and sparks flew up *par-par-par-par* into the sky and stuck in the clouds. They were the first stars.

16

HILL SAORA

Dantara, Ganjam District

When the boy and girl who escaped the flood came out of their gourd, they went to live in a cave under a great rock. From them came all living creatures. They made fire and by its heat their gourd was destroyed. The two went to the sky. The boy became the Sun and the girl the Moon. The Sun mounted the Moon and sowed star-seed in her belly.

17

HILL SAORA

Gailung, Koraput District

When the earth and sky were first made, they were close together and the light of the stars filled the world. After a while, when the number of men increased, the sky was gradually raised and when it was far away it became dark on earth. Kittung did not like this and tried to get a lamp to light the world, but there was not enough oil. He called the wind and said, 'Go

to the sky and from there bring a star; if it won't come, bind it with cord and pull it down.' The wind went up into the sky and tied each star by the feet with ropes and brought them down to Kittung. When Kittung pulled on one of the ropes, a star came down. And now whenever Kittung wants more light he pulls at one of the ropes and down comes a shooting star.[1]

[1] Another story of the origin of stars will be found in ch. XXXIII, 11.

CHAPTER FIVE

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING

1

BINJHWAR

Baghmara, Sambalpur District

When the sea rose up to the sky, Raja Indra's horse danced with delight. The noise of its hoofs is the thunder.

2

BONDO

Basupada, Koraput District

When men were born, Mahaprabhu had a road running from the sky to the earth and men used to go to and fro. Afterwards when the population increased Mahaprabhu divided men into castes, gave them places to live in and stopped the road. After that, of course, no one could go to Mahaprabhu.

One day Mahaprabhu came to visit men and they asked him, 'In what month should we sow rice and millet?' He replied, 'In the month before the rains. I will give you notice and my chaprasis will call to you from the sky and the thunder will sound.'

After that men waited for the shout of the chaprasis, and then they began to sow. And when the time came for the rains to stop, the chaprasis shouted again.

3

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

Lightning is the soul of Tarki which fled to Ispur Mahaprabhu when the twelve Gadaba brothers killed her. Ispur refused to give her a place to live. She went to Dharmo Deota. He also refused. She went to many other gods. They all

refused to have her. At last she went to Mother Earth, but the earth would not have her. Then she hid herself in the clouds and now she wanders among them for ever.

4

JHORIA

Kerba, Koraput District

The seven daughters of Jogi Jhoria were still unmarried. One year, at the time of the Pus Parab Festival, the seven daughters danced with the other village maidens. Dancing, dancing, they were drunk with pleasure. Dancing, dancing, the girls, with boys at the drums, were carried into the sky, swept up as if a hawk had snatched them away. Dancing, dancing in the sky they went to the Cloud God who was so delighted when he saw their dance that he would not let them return back to earth. He said, 'When I send down rain upon the earth, you must dance across the sky and the boys must beat their drums.' He called the girls Lightning and the boys Thunder.

5

JUANG

Korba, Keonjhar District

The five Pandava brothers play with a bit of dry cow-hide and it goes *kad-kad-kad* across the sky.

Raja Indra married a daughter of the Sun. His head and belly were so big that the girl ran away from him. Every now and then she looks at him and laughs, and the flashing of her teeth is the lightning. Raja Indra gets angry and beats her; the sound of his blows is the thunder.

6

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Sambalpur District

Raja Kans was a very wicked king. He used to rape and murder all the beautiful girls in his kingdom. In this kind of

pleasure he passed many years. One day, however, when he raised his sword to kill a young and lovely girl, she flew *bag-bag-bag* into the sky and lived there as the lightning, the maid Bijloki.

One day Raja Indra asked Bijloki how she came to be living lonely in the sky. She told him of the wicked Kans and said, 'O Maharaja, this Kans is a great villain; no beautiful young girl is safe from him. Do your duty and destroy him.'

Hearing this Indra shot at Kans with his arrows, but he missed as he always misses. Sometimes, however, he hits a tree, a man or a house, and then men say that a thunderbolt has fallen.

7

KOYA

Tamsa, Koraput District

In Hardiput was a Koya called Guruwari. A Gour lived in the same village; once when he was grazing cattle, he came to a stream, and found a lotus growing in the water. In this lotus was a girl: she came out and began to cry. The Gour saw her and took her home, and the girl grew up in his house.

There was a Koya called Sonia who fell in love with this girl. One night he went to the house, dug a hole in the wall and pushed his organ through. It reached the girl and entered her. The girl awoke and hit it with her sword and cut it off: it grew two wings and flew out of the house. The girl tried to catch it, but it flew up to Deur and he hid it and said to the girl, 'Wait a little: it will come out presently and then you can kill it.' After a time Deur let it fly out and the girl threw her sword at it. The flash of the blade is the lightning.

8

KONDA DORA

Borabandha, Koraput District

On Deomari Hill lived five Kommar brothers with their wives. They had not one child among them. One day they went to dig up ore from a pit and brought it back. Next day they put it in the still and worked at the hot iron until the whole day

had passed. In the evening a girl was born from the still.

The Kommars instantly quenched the fire and the eldest brother took the baby to his house. When she grew up she used to work in the forge. When people came they all fell in love with her, for she was beautiful as fire. Her elder brother's wife was jealous and cursed her, 'When this girl marries, let her have to live apart from her husband and be without a man.'

Accordingly when the girl's marriage was done and she was going to her husband's house, wings sprouted from her shoulders and she flew into the sky. Her husband cursed her, 'You left me; now may you never find a husband in the sky.' Her name was Mirsimena, without a husband; she is lightning.

In the sky in Bajusai Raja's garden is a great tree with spreading branches and the girl lives in this: when it rains and thunders the girl in fright runs to and fro and men can see her.

9

KOND

Garligudi, Ganjam District

There was no rain at first and clouds covered the world so that all was dark. People died of drought and darkness. When Bura Pinnu saw this he tried in every possible way to send rain to the earth but not a drop fell. Bura Pinnu removed his sacred thread and broke it and threw it down from his home in the sky, saying, 'Break open the bellies of the clouds.' The thread turned into lightning and ran to attack the clouds. It went into the clouds and burst open their bellies and rain began to fall. Then it flashed round and round and broke every cloud open and returned to Bura Pinnu and he took it in his hand. Then he married the lightning to the wind and the two went to the clouds and drove away the men that guarded them. Rani-aru was angry with the lightning and tried to shoot it with an arrow, but he missed. Bura Pinnu said to the arrow, 'When rain is needed, break open the clouds.'

10

KOND

Meriahpatta, Koraput District

The lightning is the wife of Bhimsen. She is a wanton and constantly runs away to her mother's house. Bhimsen beats her and the noise of his blows is the thunder.

11

KOND

Kapilpada, Kalahandi District

In the sky is Pijju-Pujera. When he goes to hunt and looks down, men on the earth look like animals, and he shoots at them with his bow and arrow and this is the thunderbolt. Sometimes he fires his gun and the flash is the lightning and the noise is the thunder. Generally he misses or many people would be killed.

When a tiger eats someone, the Konds burn the corpse and a lot of smoke rises into the sky. Pijju-Pujera catches it and puts it in a special house. When he is hungry he brings it out and makes a heavy cloud. Down below people get colds and coughs and sacrifice to him. He has a heavy meal, and when he is satisfied he collects the cloud and shuts it up until he gets hungry again.

12

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

When Nirantali gave Birmenja Kond his bow and arrow and he went to live in the sky, then Nirantali made fishes from the bark of the sago palm and took one of them to the Pera River and put it in. She took another fish to the sky and gave it to Birmenja, saying to him, 'Put this in the tank Pijjuband in your sky village. When you shoot your arrow, the fish will jump for fright and people on earth will see the flash of its tail.'

Nirantali put the fish in the tank and went down to earth again. The fish grew very large and its tail was seven cubits

long: it was big as an elephant. Its tail was covered with gold and silver scales. When Birmenja fires his arrow, the fish leaps in the tank, the water splashes out as rain and the tail flashes as lightning.

13

SAORA

Ikshapalli, Sambalpur District

In Indagarh lived Bodan Sai Raja. His wife was Kamlapati Rani: she was Samleyi's daughter. She had no child, though she took medicines and consulted many shamans.

Once when Kamlapati Rani was in her menses, she went to Kaltinar River. Raja Bikram passed by in a chariot drawn by Pankibirogan Bachera. The horse grew tired and froth fell from its mouth and some blew onto the Rani's head and she conceived.

In thirteen months a girl was born. The Raja and Rani were pleased and looked after her carefully. She was very beautiful. The Raja would not let anyone into the house to see her. When she was mature, the Raja consulted a shaman about her future. In his books the shaman found her name was to be Bijli and that she should marry Gurmaru, son of Rai Gidni. He said, 'As a horse leaps up, so she will fly up after her marriage.' The girl married but when Gurmaru took her home she flew into the sky and turned into the lightning.

14

HILL SAORA

Gailunga, Koraput District

Sunti Saora of Markansingi had a very beautiful daughter. She was unmarried, just fourteen years old. One day she went to bathe in the river, where a Saora youth was bathing. The two met and loved each other. Afterwards there was no one else in the world; they thought only of each other.

But Sunti married the girl to Mangala who lived in the sky, and he took her far away to live with him there. But she always remembers her lover and when she weeps for him, her tears

fall to the earth as rain. Her husband abuses her saying, 'Keep quiet', and his voice is the thunder.

15

HILL SAORA

Bungding, Koraput District

Tarmal Saora was the only son of his parents. He married Bindolni, daughter of Malbang of Rakmiguda. Soon after the wedding, Tarmal's parents died and he inherited their house at Chipparballi.

In due time Bindolni found herself pregnant. Tarmal's mother came to her in a dream. 'I am going to take birth again from your belly,' she said. 'Until you marry me to a man, I will remain with you. But once I am married I will stay neither with my husband nor with you.' In due time a girl was born, but as the years went by the parents forgot the dream. When the girl was old enough, they arranged her marriage with Usra, son of Lenda Bandaguda.

After the ceremony was over, the boy took his bride home. But darkness overtook them on the way and the party lay down to sleep by the roadside. Suddenly the girl leapt into the sky with a great noise and they awoke and watched silently in fear. The boy seized his bow and arrow and followed his bride, but he could not catch her, for she fled across the sky as the lightning.

16

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

Sima Rani Mahaprabhu was above. In Dassara month there was a festival. There were police in the sky. Sima Rani Mahaprabhu set up a target and held a shooting competition for the police.[1] They fired their guns and the flashes became the lightning. The lightning struck many trees. Sima Rani went for water; it took her four months. She went to the Golden Tank and

[1] An obvious recollection of the annual festivities promoted by the Maharaja in Parlakimidi.

the Silver Tank. With great difficulty she got water after four months. As she was bringing it home a little splashed out of her pot and fell to earth as rain. When she reached home, she mixed the water with cow-dung, prepared the ground and offered sacrifice. This is the festival of the sowing of seed, and after it the rains come.

CHAPTER SIX

THE WIND

1

BONDO

Basupada, Koraput District

Formerly when there was no wind, men had a lot of trouble. After a long time wind was born in the Under World and came up so strongly that it blew down many houses. A Kommar blacksmith was angry and tried to beat it. The wind dodged about to save itself and at last went to Mahaprabhu and said, 'When I was small, the blacksmith tried to beat me: now I am going to revenge myself by beating him.' Mahaprabhu said, 'Do what you will.' The wind said, 'But I am alone: give two to be with me.' Mahaprabhu said, 'You may have the ghosts of any men who die of fever in a single day and Bursung too will be with you.'

So the wind went to the blacksmith's house and blew it down and set it on fire. It returned, and made the ghosts and Bursung his covenant-friends and they all went to another blacksmith and blew his house and shop right up into the air. The fire blew through the air and many villages were burnt. Since then the blacksmiths have made their houses outside the village. Even now when a whirlwind comes it searches for a blacksmith's house.[1]

2

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

At first men and animals could only take short panting breaths, for there was no proper air to breathe, and they grew thin and

[1] There is no reference in the Orissa stories to the belief, so common among the Gonds (see MMI, p. 82 ff.), that the wind is blind. The association with the blacksmith, paralleled in a Pardhan story (MMI, p. 87), is probably due to the way wind is 'created' in the bellows.

dwarfish. When children were born they were only as big as your wrist. And because there was no wind to cool them men withered in the heat of the sun; at midday they wallowed in pools of mud as buffaloes do.

Now in the Under World Kankali was delivered of a daughter and she said to her, 'Go to live in man's world; there is Mahaprabhu, go and live with him.' The girl broke out of the ground and appeared on the Samudra Hill. As she came out the hill trembled and things were blown into the air. When Sona Kommar the blacksmith saw this he was angry and tried to beat the girl with his hammer. But Mahaprabhu saw it and ran to save her. 'This is the wind,' he said, 'and she will do you no harm.' But the blacksmith took no notice, so Mahaprabhu hid the girl in the bellows, and in the bellies of men and in trees and rocks and rivers. After that the wind did not blow so fiercely as at first, but it was sufficient to cool the heat of the sun and to make children fat and men tall.

3

KOND

Meriahpatta, Koraput District

The wind is the brother of the trees and Darni Pinnu [Mother Earth] is his sister.

4

KOND

Kapilpada, Kalahandi District

Grain had no husband. Mountain thought, 'If Grain has no husband, how will she bear children?' Mountain took a deep breath and Wind was born. It blew so violently that branches and leaves were broken and rice and millet were impregnated. Since then, Wind has blown to make Grain conceive.

When men sacrificed, Wind went to trees or stones. It was very hungry and the more food-sacrifice it got the harder it blew.

5

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

When the sun and moon were made, the sun's rays were at first so intolerably hot that people grumbled all the time. It was possible to go out of doors once the sun was well up. Nirantali said, 'Somehow or other we must make things cool.' She dug a pit behind her house and blew into it, filling it with her breath. She closed the mouth of the pit with a fan. After a while she removed it and her breath came violently out of the pit and trees broke and the roofs of the houses rose into the air. Nirantali checked the wind and said, 'Don't blow so hard.' The wind came more gently then, and the world grew cool.

6

SAORA

Jhar, Sambalpur District

A Raja and his queen ruled in Kachnapur. They had four daughters and one son. Unhappily, no one came to ask for the daughters in marriage. Sonbandha Raja of Sanagarh exiled his four sons. They wandered through every land and at last came to Kachnapur. They sought work but no one wanted them. One day they went in despair to the Raja's house. The Raja recognized that they were princes and asked what had happened. He let them stay with him and married them to his daughters, and they lived happily together.

But in Kachnapur there was a Dano, which ate a man a day as its ration. The people never burnt the dead, giving the Dano the corpses in the hope that they would satisfy him, but it wanted a living man every day as well.

One night, came the turn of the Raja to send someone from his house. That very day his son died and the four brothers carried the body to the place where the Dano was waiting for his food. In the evening the brothers spread their beds and lay down to sleep, keeping watch turn by turn. The night was nearly

ended when the Dano came, having seized the Diwan's daughter, and the youngest brother took his sword and killed him and cut off his nose and eyes. He lay down to sleep and in the morning the boys cut open the belly of the Dano and removed the liver.

From the belly came Baodevi the wind; it blew violently and sent trees and rocks into the air. But the boys caught Baodevi and pushed her into a box of betel. The youngest son went to Indra Raja and fetched five drops of nectar and sprinkled it on the dead youth and he sat up. Then Baodevi begged forgiveness and said, 'Let me go and I shall make no mischief in the world but will always do what you want.' The boys broke her arms and legs and sent her to wander evermore from place to place. But now the wind is maimed and cannot go so fast.

7

HILL SAORA

Rayagada, Ganjam District

Lingpu Saora was a great hunter. But one day, when he went to hunt on Bahaku Mountain, he got nothing. There was a pregnant ogress on this mountain. When she saw Lingpu she followed him, for she wanted to enjoy and eat him. But he shot her with an arrow. Her belly broke open and a boy came out. From the boy's mouth came a great wind which bent the trees before it. Then Lingpu the hunter blessed the child saying, 'Go and wander through the world. There is nothing you will not conquer, for no one will ever see you.'

8

HILL SAORA

Maneba, Ganjam District

Before the wind began to blow men used to get very hot. When they sowed their seed they got a poor crop and when they winnowed the grain, there was nothing to blow away the chaff. One day they went to Kittung and said, 'We are greatly troubled for lack of wind: what shall we do?' Kittung said, 'Go to Labosum.' They went to him. Labosum the Earth God said,

'I shall send wind to help you when it comes; in the meantime let no one go out of his house.' Kittung took them back home and Labosum took his dinner and belched violently. The wind rushed out of his belly, the earth broke open and the wind hurried round the world. Labosum said, 'Every year sacrifice to me three times.'

CHAPTER SEVEN

WATER

RAIN

1

BINJHWAR

Nangmunda, Sambalpur District

When the sky and the clouds were made and men were at work in their fields, Makarduj Raja's father, Karwatti Raja, had his kingdom between earth and sky. He used to sleep twenty-four years at a time and every twelve years turned on his side. Then for a whole year he would stay awake and not sleep for a single day. His ears alone were as big as a mountain. He used one ear as a roof above him, and the other as a bed below.

Once it so happened that on the very day that he turned over, Indra Raja's belly broke open and the water in it fell on the earth and flooded it. Then Karwatti Raja awoke and looked down and saw the floods covering houses and fields. He felt pity for men and caught the water in his ears and no more fell down. Next year he called men to him and said, 'I have Indra Raja's water here and I will shake it from my ears when you need it. If I should be asleep, come and wake me.' In this way the rains began.

But nowadays when Karwatti Raja sleeps there is famine, for men can no longer go to visit him.

2

GADABA

Alsidusra, Koraput District

When the old earth sank down and the new earth was made, Bhima Raja took water and put it in a great bin in his house. There was no water in the world and for seven years living creatures had to drink the wind.

This made everyone very miserable and at last Kundul the

Gadaba went to Bhima and begged for water. Bhima said, 'How can I give you water? If we open the bin the water will pour out and the world will again be flooded.' The Gadaba said, 'If you give water for four months at least there will be enough for the year.' Bhima Rani said, 'When, in the month of Asadh, I clean my head after my menses, on the day of my bath, I'll give you water. At that time sow your seed.' The Gadaba went home.

On the day Bhima Rani went for her bath rain fell heavily and the rivers and streams flooded and burst their banks. In the following month Bhima Raja put his servants in the bin and they splashed about and the water went over the edge and fell on the earth.

3

GADABA

Rajuput, Koraput District

Indro Mahaprabhu shut up all the rain in his tank, and not a drop fell on the earth. When men found that there was not even water for drinking, they went to Ispur Mahaprabhu and said to him, 'We have nothing to drink; our crops are withering; unless you help us, we will die.' Ispur called the gods to him and said, 'There is no rain; go and make some.' They said, 'All the rain is in the hands of Indro: we will have to fight him to get it.' Ispur Mahaprabhu said, 'Then fight him.'

The gods attacked Indro Mahaprabhu's house and fought against him. They defeated him and tied him up. But for a long time no one could break the wall of the tank in which he had shut up the water. At last Bhimo Mahaprabhu broke the wall, and the water poured out and rain fell on the earth.

Then Indro Mahaprabhu's daughter came and cut her father's bonds and he rebuilt the wall of the tank and the rain stopped.

Indro Mahaprabhu had two buffaloes. They were so wild and strong that even he could not control them. He sent a message to the gods that whoever could break them to the plough would receive his daughter in marriage. Many gods came to try,

but not one of them could catch or tame the buffaloes. Then at last Bhimo Mahaprabhu came and he caught them and yoked them to a plough and drove them across a field.

Indro Mahaprabhu gave his daughter to Bhimo, and after the marriage Bhimo went to live in his father-in-law's house. Indro used to drink the spirit from twelve stills at a sitting, and when he was drunk he would say to Bhimo, 'Go and get me some fish.' Bhimo and his wife would go to the tank and throw water out so that they could catch fish more easily. This water falls to the earth as rain.

4

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

After the world was made, there was no rain for a long time, but when it did fall it came so heavily that it seemed as if there was nothing anywhere but water. Kittung thought, 'The world will be flooded again, and all the work will be undone.' So he sent his seven sons and twelve grandsons to make channels to draw the water off. The sons made beds for rivers, the grandsons made beds for streams.

Rivers and Wells

5

GOND

Banuaguda, Koraput District

In the old days people got all their water from streams, for there were no tanks. In the hot weather they found it very difficult to manage. At Kusumpur, the Chief, a Bhattra called Bisnath, had spent three hundred rupees on the marriage of his son. The son himself had a son and a daughter. When they grew up, the girl went to Jaitiguda and the shaman of that village married her. The Chief went with other men of his village for the bride-price.

Now the Jaitiguda people had made a little well, but they

refused to let the visitors drink from it. The Chief was angry and gave orders to his men to dig a tank near the village. They made it in a single night and put a strong wall of stones round it and planted flowers on the tank. It looked so beautiful that the girls of Jaitiguda no longer got water from the well but came to bathe in the tank. The Chief's men laughed and joked with them and the girls got ready to run away with them. For a week the men tried to get the bride-price but the shaman would not pay up, so the Chief said, 'Take all the girls you can instead.' They took five unmarried girls and the Chief married one of them to his son and the others to the neighbours' sons. After that tanks were made everywhere.

6

JUANG

Kirtanpur, Dhenkanal District

The seven brothers were out hunting. They grew very thirsty, but there was no water in the world. They searched and searched, but could get nothing to quench their thirst. Now the youngest brother was unmarried. He remembered that his mother had told him that, should he get thirsty, he had only to take her name and all would be well. He took the names of Rusi and Patharsaorni and lifted a stone—and there was water. The seven brothers drank and quenched their thirst. From that day there has been water in the world.

7

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Sambalpur District

Long long ago lived a man and woman and their only son. One day this boy fell ill and the parents were in a panic, not knowing what to do. They ran to and fro, calling a magician there, fetching medicine here, offering goats and pigeons to the gods. At last the old man discovered a very famous magician and persuaded him to go with him to his house.

But as they were on the way, the boy's life left his body.

His mother was all alone and she began to weep loudly. Poor thing! It was her only son. She cried so much that the tears from her eyes were like a river and in fact when they fell to the ground they actually became a river. And as the woman continued to weep the river came down in flood.

And when the father with the magician drew near to their house they found their passage barred by a flooded river. The old man was afraid. 'There was no river here when I left the house,' he thought. 'Something must have happened,' and he said to the magician, 'Go home; there is no longer any need for you here.'

At last the mother ceased her lamentations and the flood went down and her husband was able to cross the river and reach his house. There he found his son dead. He said to his wife, 'Had you not wept so much I could have brought the magician and he might have saved our son.' But she said, 'I wept in order to create rivers in the world.' He was angry at that and exclaimed, 'Do you mean to tell me that you let our son die in order to make a river?' He sacrificed the woman to the river and then plunged into its waters himself and was drowned.

8

KOND

Rodigumma, Ganjam District

The Konds were born in Saphaganna and soon afterwards the Pangias and Kuttias separated. The leader of the Pangias was a very great man called Pampo. He had a son and a daughter. When they grew up, the boy married but the girl remained unmarried for there was no youth she cared for. She was not yet mature. But presently the priest of that village came to betroth her to his son. Pampo was ready to give her, and the arrangements were made.

Suddenly the girl had her first period; it lasted for seven days. She was unclean for eight days and then asked her father, 'What do I do now?' He said, 'Take a broken pot and a fan of ashes and some green *sāja* wood and go to Bunjhi-anu River and there

use a dead buffalo's head as hearth and green wood for fire and boil your soiled clothes with the ash.' The girl went to the river, prepared the hearth with a buffalo's head, but when she lit the fire there was no flame and only smoke which spread over the world. All living creatures who saw it were afraid and many small birds died.

Bura Pinnu came to the river and when he saw the mist he asked the girl where it came from. She said, 'It's because of the green wood.' Bura Pinnu cut a bamboo, collected the smoke, shut it up in the tube and threw it into the water, and said, 'During the rains you may come out and wander through the world but after that you must go back into the water.' The girl bathed, cleaned her clothes and went home. Soon afterwards she was married and in time bore many children.

9

KOND

Kudelpada, Kalahandi District

The wives of Sukabenj and Kudalabenj were both pregnant at the same time. When the children were born, they had no water to bathe them and the mothers were very thirsty.

Sukabenj and Kudalabenj called their dog and went to find water. They grew weary and sat down together. But the dog pissed and with its feet dug up the wet earth and found a little water.

The dog ran to the women and barked '*Kui-kui*' and licked their feet. Annoyed, they pushed it away; it went off and slept beside the water.

When Sukabenj and Kudalabenj missed the dog, they went to find it and there it was beside the water. They were very pleased, but how could they take it home? They had no vessels. In the end they drew a line with a bow and let the water flow *bitibutu bitibutu,* bubbling along it to near their house, where they dug a tank and built a strong wall round it.

The water that flowed from this tank was the first river.

10

MURIA

Siunaguda, Koraput District

When men were first created, Mahaprabhu made them little streams very far apart; they had to carry their water a long way and found it most troublesome.

One day five Muria youths went to graze their cattle. They took them a long way, let them graze and began to play. As they played, one of the boys made a little hole in the ground and pissed in it. They all pissed there until the hole was full; then they bathed in it and washed their clothes. Mahaprabhu came by and saw them. The boys said, 'It's so difficult to get water that we have to bathe in our own urine.'

Mahaprabhu thought, 'If I make water come up from little pits like this all over the place, there will be plenty for everyone.' He shot an arrow into the pit and it went right down to the Under World; the lower waters came up through the hole and filled the pit until it overflowed like a stream. Mahaprabhu said, 'Dig pits like this near your village and you'll get water, plenty of it and near at hand.'

11

MURIA

Parsel, Koraput District

When men were first made, they neither ate nor drank; then Mahaprabhu made grain and they ate it. But they did not get thirsty, so they did not drink water. No children were born and the number of men remained the same. Mahaprabhu thought this was not good, and he called men and asked them why they had no children. 'Don't you eat enough?' 'Yes, but we don't drink, for we don't feel thirsty.' Mahaprabhu thought that must be why there were no children. He made a lamp of iron slag, put in oil and a wick and shut it with a lid. He gave it to men; it was soft as a fruit. Mahaprabhu said, 'This is a fruit: eat it.' He divided it to the people and they swallowed it. From its heat

in their bellies they got dry and thirsty and demanded water. After that men began to drink, and many children were born.

12

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

At first there were just water-holes and springs, but no rivers. Baino Saora had a daughter. She matured but she had no menstrual period; she grew older, but still there was no period. She married, but still there was no period. She went to her husband's house and only then after two years did she have a period. On the day she bathed in a spring she took off her clothes and washed them; then she filled her pot with water and returned. On the way she knocked her foot against a stone and the pot fell and broke and the water flowed away. So strongly did it flow that it wore a channel in the ground and became the first river.

The Rainbow

13

JUANG

Balipal, Keonjhar District

If a tiger catches one man by the head and another by the feet and eats them, then later the souls of the two men go into the sky and meet. If they meet in the east, it means that there will be good rain; if they meet in the west, the rain will be poor.

14

KOYA

Dudimetla, Koraput District

When the world sank down below the waters, Dadaburka and his sister hid in a gourd. Bhima tried to kill them with his sword. When he found he could not, he went home in a temper and broke his sword.

After Dadaburka had escaped from the gourd and made his house and had a family, Bhima again plotted to kill him. 'They can't go under the water now,' he said to himself. He took his bow and arrows and went to kill him. Dadaburka and his wife took their children and hid them under a bit of gourd. Bhima shot his arrows at them for fifteen days but they fell harmlessly from the gourd. When his arrows were finished, Bhima was angry with his bow and said, 'From today I'll never use a bow and arrow.' He threw the bow into the sky and it stuck there.[1]

Dadaburka said to his children, 'Bhima tried to kill you with this when you were small. It is our enemy. When you see it, it will rain heavily and you will be in danger if you go out.'

15

KUTTIA KOND

Sutaghati, Ganjam District

In Saphaganna lived Nirantali and Kapantali. They made a bow and arrows and called a Kond named Bhimenja[2] and said, 'Kill any animal you can with this and if it is eatable, eat it.' So Bhimenja took the bow into the jungle and began to hunt.

One day he thought, 'If I only live on earth with this bow, my name will not endure. I will take the bow and live with it in the sky and all the world will see me.' Accordingly he built a sky-house in a sky-village called Badori.

In the rains Bhimenja brings his bow out of the house and shows it to the world. He shoots his arrows and makes thunder. When the Konds see the bow they sacrifice a she-goat and a hen.

16

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

Nirantali wanted to measure the world. She called Raisinda-Bhimenja and asked him how to do it. He made a bow and

[1] Popular Hindu tradition associates the rainbow with the bow of Rama. Here it is the bow of Bhima, commonly regarded as a rain-god.

[2] Here the rain-god Bhima becomes the Kond hunter Bhimenja.

arrows, tied strings to the arrows and shot them in all directions, then pulled them in and measured them. The string was longest in the direction of the salt country and Bombay-Calcutta. The string was shortest towards the land of many hills and little villages.

Nirantali was so pleased that she wanted to marry Raisinda-Bhimenja but he was frightened and fled up to the sky with his bow, which still remains there as the rainbow.

17

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

Kittung made a field and sowed every kind of seed. When the crop ripened he called all the men in the world and had it reaped. For threshing he made a great floor twenty-four miles long and twenty-four miles broad. It took them fifteen days to thresh the grain and then they began to winnow. This took them another fifteen days. By now the different grains were arranged in long rows.

Kittung began to carry the grain to his house and when he had taken about a quarter and the rest was left on the floor, a great wind blew and the rows of grain were swept into the air to Uyungsum. He took it and refused to give it back and said, 'When it rains I'll show it to you. When you see it, sacrifice a goat.' Thus the rainbow began.

18

HILL SAORA

Mannemgolu, Koraput District

Kittung, who made the world and all mankind, had a son of his own called Maru. When the boy was old enough to use a bow and arrow, Kittung arranged his marriage with the daughter of Ruangan Raja who lived in the sky. Ten years after their marriage, Maru's wife's younger sister was to be married, and Maru and his wife went to the wedding. When the marriage party arrived there was a quarrel and Maru was beaten by

Ruangan Raja. His bow fell from his hand and flew up into the sky. Maru himself died. When Kittung heard of it he came to see what had happened, and there was his son's body lying on the ground and his bow hanging in the sky. Then Kittung blessed the bow saying, 'Go, son, your life has fled, but everyone will see your bow. You will be the rainbow and the whole world will see your beauty.' And now whenever Maru's widow sees the bow she weeps and her tears fall like rain.[1]

[1] See also ch. XXIV, 6.

CHAPTER EIGHT

EARTHQUAKE

1

BINJHWAR

Kelkadabri, Sambalpur District

Nang Deo holds the earth on his head. At long intervals his head aches and he raises his hands to shift his burden. This causes an earthquake.

2

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

When Mahaprabhu made the world and living creatures, and they increased in number, the world began to sink down by its weight and men and animals grew frightened. They went to Mahaprabhu and said, 'Look, the world is sinking down.' Many gods tried to support the world but they could not.

Then Mahaprabhu called Kankali and said, 'I give you the Under World as your kingdom. Go there and put the Middle World on your head and save all mankind, for otherwise it will sink down.' Kankali said, 'How can I get anything to eat or drink there?' Mahaprabhu answered, 'All the world will offer sacrifice to you.' He called Soma Bodnaik and said, 'Tell all the priests that they must give Kankali her food.' They agreed and Kankali went to the Under World and put the world on her head. But though at first the people made their offerings regularly, from time to time they forget and Kankali has to remind the priests by shaking the world. Then people give her food in a hurry and the earthquake stops.

3

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

From time to time Dharmo Mahaprabhu visits his wife Bas-

moti Ma (Mother Earth). When they couple, there is an earthquake.

4

JHORIA

Tarpadro, Koraput District

Gubbusingh Raja lived in Goriyagarh. He was very strong and rich. He had three wives, but none of them bore him any children. He grew old and then at last the youngest wife gave birth to a daughter. When the girl grew up, the Raja sent chaprasis to find a youth to be her husband. They went to the Upper World, but could not find anyone suitable.

In the Under World, however, in a place called Birayigarh, was Sirasa Raja. He had one son. The chaprasis took the boy to Gubbusingh Raja and he married his daughter to him. When the girl came home to see her parents, many soldiers came with her, so many that the earth trembled under their tread. For at the time of her marriage Earth had promised the girl that, 'Whenever you want to visit your parents I will send the news ahead by making the earth tremble.'

5

KOYA

Dudimetla, Koraput District

When Bhima Raja and his Rani Lakmi were living on Mahullakta Hill, they made every kind of department of Government and, calling people from each village in turn, forced them to work in the palace. From every house one man had to go to perform this duty. The Raja decided that men of every house should pay taxes twice in the year. He refused to accept money from his subjects' hands but gave an order that they should load hares with little sacks of coins and drive them to the palace.

People had to keep small hares in their houses and fatten and tame them. When the hares grew big, four or six villages would combine to load one of them. But as they always overloaded the hare, it could not run and it took a month to do a day's

journey. Men found this very tedious and at last they decided to end it by killing the Raja. 'Once we've killed the Raja we'll all be happy,' they said. They took their weapons and approached the palace.

Now the Raja had two sons, both of whom were still young. When the rebels arrived, the Raja was in his court and they entered and killed him there. When the Rani heard the news, she hid her sons in a cellar and locked the door. She put her gold and silver ornaments in a little box and hid it in a well. She and her attendant women leapt into the well and were drowned. Some of the Raja's chaprasis and clerks were killed, some hid and some escaped. The rebels tried to find the children, but without success.

Now the two children tried to climb up to revenge the death of their parents and they banged on the door. As they shook the door, they shook the whole world. The gold hidden in the well was found by one Tanko, two years ago, near Malkangiri.

6

KUTTIA KOND

Kumrabali, Ganjam District

One day Nirantali went to the place of her birth and put a door over the cave. Soru Pinnu, Janma Pinnu, Jaonra Pinnu, Buar Pinnu and other gods—Mamli Pinnu, Komor Pinnu, Durimai, Baburai, Tillurai—went in and lived there, shutting the door behind them.

Whenever any god comes out, and opens the door, the earth shakes, and when he goes back and shuts the door, the shaking stops. This is what an earthquake is.

7

KUTTIA KOND

Kudimel, Ganjam District

When Koira and his wife Paira were born, the sky was only one yard above the earth. Koira put one hand on the ground and lifted the sky with the other. In this way he and his wife

were able to get out of the hole in the ground. Koira's ears were big as an elephants' and he was fifteen cubits tall. When Rani-aru saw him, she was afraid that he would destroy mankind. So she caught Koira and Paira and pushed them back into their hole and put a stone and earth above it. Koira and Paira tried to get out but could not move the stone. They still try and when they do, there is an earthquake.

At the time of earthquake the Konds sacrifice buffaloes, bullocks, goats and fowls; if they fail to do this, men die, the rains are scanty and the harvests fail.

8

HILL SAORA

Bongthalda, Ganjam District

In Kormataro was Kittung. When the world sank down and water flowed everywhere, Kittung raised it up and made it anew. But the world he made sank down again and there was no way of keeping it steady. But Kittung had a son and a daughter. He called them and said, 'Now you two, brother and sister, go down and rule over the Under World.' They went down and put the world on their heads and it sank down no more. But when the girl goes to bathe at the end of her period, her brother has to hold the world by himself and its weight is so heavy that he often shakes it a little. And if the girl takes a long time over her bath, there may be a great earthquake.

9

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

On Sarsan Hill was born the first shaman. Another Saora went to learn the art of divination from him and when he had learnt it began to practise it himself.

In a village near by a Saora girl died: she was unmarried and they took her corpse to Sarsan Hill and buried her near where Kittung was living. After her Guar ceremony was completed, her ghost went to live with Kittung and they became man and

wife. After some time Kittung said to the ghost, 'Don't live in this land: go to the Under World and live there. Come at night and sleep with me. If we have any child, I'll send you the cost of its food, and you can look after it in the Under World.' The ghost said, 'When my child is born, how can I let you know?' Kittung said, 'Shake the earth and I'll know my child is born.' She went to the Under World and when the child was born she shook the earth. Thus earthquakes began.[1]

[1] See also ch. XXVII, 6.

PART TWO: THE VEGETABLE WORLD

CHAPTER NINE

FLOWERS, GRASSES AND TREES

Flowers

1

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

One day two Bhattras, Somnath and Hanu, went to the Dongarpador bazaar. They sold their things and started for home. On the way they came to a village where liquor was on sale. They decided to have a drink and go on their way refreshed. They bought two annas' worth of liquor and, when they had drunk it, decided on another two annas' worth and so on till eight annas were spent and both were very drunk and went staggering home. On the way they rested by a big pond. They began to quarrel and beat each other. Somnath had a gold ornament in his ear and it fell into the water. The two searched everywhere but could not find it and finally went home. But from the gold ornament grew lotus plants which spread over the water.

2

BINJHWAR

Garbhona, Sambalpur District

In Aljharpur lived a Raja and a Rani of exactly the same age, for they were born on the same day of the same month. They had a son and a daughter. There were no other relatives. One day the Rani fell ill and died.

Two years later when he was out hunting the Raja wounded a wild pig and in its fury it ripped his right leg open. The Raja died of it. After his death, the son and daughter lived together, for neither was married. They became very poor; they had only one pair of bullocks and the Raja's son himself ploughed his field with them.

One day as he was ploughing, his sister got fever and was unable to take him his gruel in time and he thought she must be making love to some youth. 'Look how she ruins my name,' he cried, and when at last she reached the field, he drew his sword and prepared to kill her. 'Kill me,' she said. 'Certainly kill me, but first hear what I have to say.' She said, 'Cut my bones and liver into bits and scatter them round the field; cut off my head and bury it in the middle.'

The boy killed his sister and scattered her bones and liver and buried her head in the middle of the field. From the head rose a great palace and from the belly came champa and cassia flowers and from the liver hibiscus flowers. The hair turned into thatching grass[1] and the tongue became the white brother-sister flower.

3

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

Kondmuli Deota, god of the Konds, lived on Borandi Hill. He had stolen the wife of another god, and had brought her to this hill. The husband searched for them, and when he discovered where they were, he came with a party of other gods. They fought Kondmuli and cut off his head, and the husband took his wife home. But as they were going, the girl took the pin from her hair and threw it on the ground in memory of her lover. It turned into a marigold.

4

KOYA

Tamsa, Koraput District

On Karisar Hill lived one Mangla Koya, a very rich man with many servants. He made a garden forty miles long and forty miles wide on Bendisar Hill, and planted every kind of flower and tree. But not one of them gave a sweet smell. One day Mangla went to Deur and told him about it. Deur put sweet-smelling water in a pot and told Mangla to sprinkle it over his trees and plants.

[1] *Pollinea argentea.*

Mangla took the pot to Bendisar Hill and called Kariya Ganda to sprinkle the water. But as Kariya Ganda was carrying the pot he tripped and spilt the water. He managed to catch a few drops in a potsherd and he mixed this with fresh water in another pot and went on to sprinkle it in the garden.

But now the scent was weak and not enough for all the flowers: that is why some flowers have no scent.

5

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

Siwalenj and Kudalenj made a tank. Gods came to live there. The water looked black. When people went to bathe they were caught and eaten by the gods and soon nobody dared go near the place. One day Nirantali thought, 'How can I please the gods so that we can go to bathe safely?' So thinking, she put rice and an egg in a leaf-cup and went to the tank. She worshipped and, breaking the egg, threw it into the tank and went home. Next day she found beautiful red, blue and white lotus flowers growing on the water. She was pleased, and so were the gods, and after that it was safe to bathe in the water.

6

HILL SAORA

Maneba, Ganjam District

In the old days men and women wore a great many necklaces. Rugnu Saora had a daughter who died while still unmarried. They put her cloth and necklaces by her pyre. They performed a Guar ceremony for her and after it was over they found flowers growing from her necklaces, every kind of flower from every kind of bead. From the brass pin in her hair came the rose; from her necklace, the champa and hibiscus flowers.

Then she gave her sister a dream and said, 'Flowers have grown from the necklaces I used to wear. Now make flower-garlands for the gods.'

7

HILL SAORA

Liabo, Ganjam District

Sumbro Saora and his wife Addi lived on Mahendragiri Mountain. They were young and it was many months before Addi conceived. Her first child miscarried, but after four months she again conceived and this time the child was born without mishap. They buried the placenta behind the house near the door. Six months later Sumbro and Addi went to another village and, while they were away, there grew up from the placenta-pit a marigold flower. When they returned they found their house beautiful and fragrant with the yellow blossoms. Uyungsum the Sun saw the flowers and was pleased with them. He came to Sumbro in a dream and said, 'Offer marigolds to me in sacrifice.' Sumbro did so and the god was pleased. Since then marigolds have spread throughout the world and the Saoras offer them to every god.

Grasses

8

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

Before there was grass, the world was a flat clear plain. When human beings were born, Rumrok told them to build houses of wood. They did so and made the roofs of leaves, but the cattle used to pull down the leaves and eat them and in the rains the roofs leaked. So there was trouble for everybody; besides there were not enough leaves for the hungry cattle and they got very thin. So the people went to Rumrok and said, 'We've made houses but they leak. Show us some other way to roof them and give us other food for our cattle.' Rumrok promised to arrange something and sent them away.

One night Rumrok went to wander round the world but he could not find any grass. So he pulled out some of his own hair and threw it in the air and it became thatching grass. He pulled

out his beard and it became broom grass.[1] His moustache became spear grass.[2] The hair on his chest became the sacred *dupi* grass.[3] The hair of his hands and feet became the tiny *daresajudi* grass. So the world was covered with grass and looked green and beautiful.

9

GADABA

Pottapad, Koraput District

In Bailargarh there were eighty houses of Konds and Gadabas. In this village the chief man was Jugridi, a Kond. One day this Kond went hunting and a vulture injured his head with its beak so severely that he died. At the time of his death he said to his relatives, 'Do not burn or bury me. Cut up my body and throw the bits away.' Accordingly they cut up the body and scattered the pieces over the countryside.

Seven days afterwards, from the legs of the corpse grew every kind of tree, from its left arm a *jamun* tree, from its right arm a mango. From the nails of its hands grew a bamboo, from the nails of its feet a *sarai* tree. The tuft of hair became broom grass; the moustache became thatching grass; the hair on the chest turned into *dupi* grass. From his belly came every kind of creeper, from his liver every kind of flower, from his gall bladder the hibiscus flower.

In this way Jugridi's body turned into every kind of grass, flower and tree.

10

GADABA

Onagelu, Koraput District

Long ago, the sister of Lakshman Mahapurub was sitting naked outside her house and husking rice. She had put her cloth a little away from her and only had a scrap to wipe off the sweat from her body as she worked.

[1] *Thysanoloena agrostis,* Nees. [2] *Heteropogon contortus.* [3] *Cynodon dactylon.*

Presently Lakshman Mahapurub came along the path, carrying two mountains over his shoulders. From far away he saw his sister working naked, so he put down his load and shot a pellet at her to warn her that he was coming. But she took no notice, so he fired an arrow. It stuck in the ground before her but she still took no notice. At last he sent his dog and then she realized that her brother was on the way. She could not reach her cloth in time, so she jumped into the mortar holding the scrap of cloth in her hand. She went down under the earth and at last came out again at Kappor Chua. As she went down, the earth sounded *dal-dal*.

When Lakshman Mahapurub saw what had happened he went to search for his sister. At Kappor Chua he found her still below the ground and only her hair sticking out above it. He took hold of it to pull her out and the hair came off in his hands. He threw it away and it turned into thatching grass.

Then his sister came out with no hair on her head, and dressed in nothing but the little scrap of cloth. She stood behind her brother and he said, 'Because your head is shaven and you are wearing a tiny scrap of cloth, your children will be Bondos.'[1]

II

GADABA

Thal Duralu, Koraput District

One day Lakshman was carrying a mountain on his shoulder to dam a stream. He shot a blunt arrow to clear the path in front of him. His sister was sitting naked to husk rice. When she heard the sound of the arrow she looked round and saw her brother and since she was naked she jumped into a stream to hide herself.

Lakshman was afraid that his sister would be drowned and ran to save her. He caught her by the hair but it came away in his hand. He threw it away on the bank and it turned into grass. But the girl went down into the stream and at last came up at Kappor Chua.

[1] Variants of this story are given in my *Bondo Highlander*, pp. 65 ff.

12

JHORIA

Chikanput, Koraput District

Janglu Gadaba was the headman of Dunaiput. Once when the villagers went hunting, the whole day passed without their seeing anything. But as night came, a very large boar came out of the forest. The hunters surrounded it and Janglu cried, 'If anyone lets it escape, he will have to pull out his moustache, piss on it and throw it away.' But it was at Janglu himself that the boar charged and Janglu was so frightened that he dropped his bow and arrow and fell flat on the ground. The villagers laughed at him and said, 'Now your moustache must come out.' They caught him, pulled out his moustache, pissed on it and threw it away. Janglu would not go home after this, but remained angry and ashamed in the jungle. After a time he said to his moustache, 'You were the hair of Janglu: now be Raja of the jungle. From today everyone will have to thatch their roofs with the grass on which they pissed.' As he spoke the hair turned into thatching grass.

13

KOYA

Tamsa, Koraput District

The watchman of Barleng was a man named Jodu. He had one daughter. She was most beautiful, loveliest of all the village girls. Ganda youths came from everywhere to ask for her in marriage, but she always refused.

When she grew up and was still unmarried, she began to meet boys and play with them. All the village boys tried to win her. The girl used to go outside the village after dark and play with the boys, one by one.

Now this girl had very long hairs and when a boy was about to enter, he would shrink back afraid. The girl, denied her pleasure, was miserable. At last, a rich man, the watchman of Lamapur, succeeded in persuading her to marry his son. But when husband and wife lay together, the husband could do nothing because of

the hairs. He was very upset and sat in a corner, saying, 'Why did my father spend so much money on such a girl? Her thing is nothing but hair.' The girl too was miserable and next morning when she went to relieve herself she took a pot of water with her. She said, 'From childhood, this hair has spoilt my happiness: let me get rid of it.' She shaved it off and threw it away, pouring water from her pot over it and all of a sudden it turned into *dupi* grass.

14

KUTTIA KOND

Kudelpada, Ganjam District

One day Paramugatti went hunting on his horse. He neither ate nor rested but rode hard all day. One of the horse's hairs fell to the ground and it said, 'One of my hairs has fallen. Get down and pick it up.' Paramugatti said, 'No, it has fallen for your own benefit. It will turn into grass for you to eat.' And presently there was grass all over the forest.

15

KUTTIA KOND

Charganna, Ganjam District

When the earth was made, at first there were no trees or grasses, and Nirantali did not like the look of it. So she dug up some earth and put a handful here and a handful there and so made the mountains. But they were bare of trees. Then from the place whence Sun and Moon came up, an elephant also emerged. On this elephant were many blood-sucking insects. The elephant came to Saphaganna and the insects fell off. From the first insect was born the sago palm, from the next the *sarai,* from the rest the *irpi* and other trees. Now there were plenty of trees, but no grass. Nirantali picked up the smallest insects, put them in a basket and went sowing them everywhere and grass sprang up. Three of the insects hid on her leg. She brushed them off and some of the hair came too and turned into thatching grass.

16

PARENGA

Dumriput, Koraput District

There is a hill called Khotani near Nandpur. Long ago seven brothers lived there with their sister. The boys used to go hunting and the girl stayed at home to cook. One day while she was husking rice she got very hot and took off her cloth and did her work naked. That day the brothers came home early and the eldest brother who was leading the way saw her. He said to himself, 'If she thinks we have seen her, she may die of shame.' So he took an arrow and shot it towards her. It struck the ground just in front of her, and she recognized it as her eldest brother's. She jumped up and hurriedly tied her cloth round her. But she realized that her brothers must have seen her naked and she ran towards the tank to drown herself. The brothers followed her, but they were too late. All the eldest brother could do was to catch her hair as she sank beneath the water. It came out in his hands and he threw it down on the bank.

Presently the hair turned into thatching grass.

17

HILL SAORA

Abbasingi, Ganjam District

In the days when men had tails they used to sweep the floor with them. But as the population increased, the tails got in the way and at marriages and funerals, people used to tread on each other's tails and trip over, and this caused a lot of amusement.

One day Kittung went to the Under World bazaar and found it crowded as usual. As he went round looking at the stalls and searching for some good tobacco, someone trod on his tail and he went sprawling on the ground. Unfortunately he fell against a stone and two of his front teeth were knocked out. The whole bazaar roared with laughter and Kittung lost his temper. He picked up his own tail, pulled it out and threw it away. When the other tails saw this, they were frightened and they all of their own accord detached themselves and ran away. Kittung's

own tail became the sago palm and the rest turned into the grass which is now used for making brooms.

18

HILL SAORA

Olleida, Ganjam District

In Saksai village there was a very old Saora called Bulli. He had five sons; all were grown up, indeed the hair of the eldest was already whitening. When Bulli died, his sons performed the funeral ceremony and went to the river afterwards to shave. The white hair of the eldest brother was left lying on the bank. Then the dead man came to his sons in a dream and said, 'From the hair shaved in my honour grass has grown; it will be very profitable to you. Cut it and use it for thatching your houses, then you will have no trouble in the rains.' The brothers did as their father commanded. That is why the thatching grass, like hair, whitens first at the roots.

Thorns

19

BHATTRA

Deodhara, Koraput District

In the south country was Judagarh village. The Raja of that village had three Ranis. None of them had children. The Raja took a lot of medicine but still there were no children. At last he sent word through his kingdom, 'If any doctor can give my wives children, I'll give him half my kingdom.' But no one could help.

On Kanguda Dongar lived Kaliya Dano: he used to catch and eat men. The Dano heard the Raja's proclamation. He took the form of a sadhu and went to the Raja and said, 'I live in Kanguda Hill: there is my hut. If any childless woman comes there she'll get a child if she serves me for twenty-one days.' So the Raja sent his first and second wives, but the Dano ate them both.

After twenty-one days the Raja watched the road; he watched

it for forty days. When the wives did not return, the Raja went with his army and demanded them back. The Dano said, 'They've gone to bathe.' The Raja searched and found his Rani's ring and he then realized what had happened. In a great rage he demanded the truth. The Dano tried to escape. But the Raja and his army chased him. He climbed a tree and pulling out his teeth fixed them in the trunk so that none could climb after him.

This is how trees began to grow thorns.

20

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

There was a Lohar in Saphaganna. In those days there was no sky. The Lohar decided to make a sky. He went towards Bilamal to get iron. On the way he found a pit full of iron-stones. He smelted them and made a great round iron plate. Then he made four iron pillars and fixed the plate with nails. and raised it into the air. Thus the sky was made. Some of the nails were left and one of them ran into his foot: he was angry and threw all the nails away. Whatever trees were hit by the nails grew thorns; the nails that fell on the ground became thorn-bushes.

21

KOYA

Tondapalli, Koraput District

Buddhiya was the watchman of Kajiguda village. He used to weave cloth and sell it. He had a son and, when the boy grew up, he taught him weaving. Then the boy too began to go about selling his cloth. The boy said to his father, 'Arrange my marriage.' The father said, 'I've not enough money: you can't get married yet.' The boy made no reply. He made two very fine saris and went from village to village searching for a girl, but no one took any notice of him till he came to Bahmanguda where many Brahmins lived. There was an unmarried girl there

and the boy showed her his saris. She wanted them and said to her father, 'Buy a sari for me.' But her father refused and the girl went crying with her pot to the stream.

The boy was cooking his dinner on the bank of the stream. The girl told him about the sari. 'If you'll come with me, I'll give it to you,' said the boy. That night they went away together; when they reached home, they got married. Soon the girl was pregnant and after six months she had a craving for bombax fruit. She told her husband to get one for her somehow. He went to the forest and found a bombax tree; but it was too high for him to climb. He came home and told his wife.

The girl was wearing a golden bangle: she took it off and told him to cut it into bits and stick them in the tree as footrests. When he did this he was able to climb up, and pick some fruit; he came down and tried to remove the steps, but they would not come out. After a time, they turned into thorns.

Weeds

22

KOND

Pusbari, Kalahandi District

Formerly there was no seed. In Saphaganna the horse and elephant were born. They had in their possession the seeds of every kind of grain.

Nirantali told the horse and elephant, 'You've got the seed, but you can't sow it. Give it to men and they will sow it for you.' So they gave the seed to her and she gave it to men, and they sowed it. There was no grass and the grain suffered from no disease.

Grain could talk in those days. One day Paramugatti was ill and Grain came to Nirantali saying, 'He ought not to fall ill from eating us. What is the matter with him? We do not get ill, yet he, a human being, gets ill. Grain went home and Nirantali told Paramugatti what it had said. Nirantali said, 'When you next pull a hair from your beard, give it to me.' One day he gave her such a hair and she threw it in a field and it turned into weeds and gave disease to Grain.

23

HILL SAORA

Abbasingi, Ganjam District

At first there were no fields. But when the number of men on earth increased they cleared fields and made ploughs. They used seven kinds of grain and the crops grew well; there were no weeds and no disease attacked the growing plants. Whatever was sown bore splendidly and the people became rich. There were no poor in the world at that time. Each grain was so big that it served for a man's meal.

When Ramma and Bimma saw this they went to Kittung and said, 'If everybody is rich they'll not be afraid of us.' Kittung said 'It's all because of their fine crops.' Ramma and Bimma said, 'What can we do about it?' Kittung said, 'You must make grass and weeds grow in the fields and then men will have to waste half their time removing it.' 'But how can we get grass and weeds?' 'Find the foetus of a six or seven-months' woman who has aborted; strip yourselves naked and bury it at midnight in a field.'

Ramma and Bimma went off to find such a foetus, but they could not get one anywhere. But Ramma's own wife was seven months pregnant and they forced her to abort. At midnight, naked, Ramma and Bimma carried the foetus to the field of one Mani Saora and buried it there. When the rains came, grass and weeds sprang up in every field, and since then men have no longer been rich.

TREES

24

BINJHWAR

Achanakpur, Sambalpur District

Bhagavan began to make the world. When he had completed his work, he took hairs from his body and threw them over the face of the earth, and they turned into trees.

25

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

When the earth sank beneath the flood, trees and animals were destroyed. Then Rumrok made a new world and created all creatures. But there were no trees and for lack of shade people got very hot and the world did not look nice.

Rumrok thought, 'There's no shade and no wood for houses or fires; what can we do about it?' He took dirt from his body and as he rubbed it three kinds of seed came out and he put them aside carefully. He piled up rocks to make a mountain and spread the soil above it. He planted the three seeds and three trees were born—*sargi, wartenu* and *bhua.* He carefully guarded these and when they flowered and fruited, Rumrok showed them to Sukro Didayi, telling him how to use the wood for building and firewood. From these came all other trees.

26

KOND

Pusbari, Kalahandi District

At first there were no trees, there was just a great bare plain. Paramugatti and Mangragatti went to Nirantali and said, 'There's no wood. How can we build houses, light fires or fence our gardens?' Nirantali gave them elephant's hairs and horse's hairs and said, 'Go and throw these all over the place. From the elephant's hairs will come tamarind, *irpi,* the date and sago palms; from the horse's hairs all other trees. Then you'll have plenty of wood for building and fencing.'

27

SAORA

Kusudda, Sambalpur District

At first there were no trees or grasses on the earth and only a few living creatures. But when men and cattle

increased, the earth felt the weight and began to sink down, and men were frightened and went to Mahaprabhu.

He was anxious and called Bhimsen and tried to make the earth strong, but it was impossible. Then Bhimsen said, 'I know what to do.' He cut his stick into four bits and drove them into the four corners of the earth and the earth became strong. From these bits trees grew and bore fruit and flowers and when the seeds scattered a great jungle grew up. The first bit of stick became the *abba;* the second the *sargiya;* the third the plum; the fourth the sago palm.

28

HILL SAORA

Padangpanga, Ganjam District

Kittung cut off his beard and considered where he should put the hair. 'If I put it in water it will be spoilt.' So he buried it in the ground. From it grew a date palm, then a coconut palm and gradually all trees were born. For this reason the Saoras offer coconuts to Kittung.

29

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

After the first earth had sunk beneath the waters and the new earth was made, Kittung planted the forest with fruit-bearing trees. These were the only trees he made. At that time, there were few people and no grain; everybody lived on fruit. But when the population increased and men made fields and hill-clearings and sowed them with grain, they needed firewood to cook with and they cut down the fruit trees and burnt the wood. In this way the forest was destroyed.

When Kittung saw this he was very sad, for he loved his trees and had pity on them, and he went to find seed. But he found none and sat down on a rock and wept. Then the tutelary-wife of Kittung's father[1] came out of the ground and asked

[1] Kittung's father must have been a shaman, married to a spirit-wife in the Under World.

him what the matter was. Kittung told her and she gave him seed saying, 'Every tree will bear fruit, but men will be able to eat the fruit only of those that were first made. They will not be able to eat the fruit of these new trees.' Kittung sowed the seed and when the forest grew again he said to men, 'Do not cut fruit trees till they are dry and useless. For your fires and building use the new trees.'

Aegle marmelos, Correa

30

HILL SAORA

Ragaisingi, Ganjam District

There were two brothers—Kurso and Parso. They had a sow with a litter of ten. They sold eight of the sucklings and kept two. They cut the tail of one and removed its testes. They dug a pit in the garden, put salt in it, and buried the testes. After six months the rains came and from the testes grew a *bel* tree and spread its branches over the garden. The brothers thought. 'It was in this very place that we buried the pig's testes.' They cared for the tree and fenced it round. It soon gave fruit, which had a stone like a pig's testes.[1]

Bamboos

31

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

At first men made baskets, winnowing-fans and mats out of leaves; but they broke them very quickly and were always having to make new ones. This was a tiresome business and the people wearied of it. A man and woman of the Odde caste, living in Pengaguda, thought to themselves, 'If we could make these things

[1] The seeds of this tree which, with its aromatic trifoliate leaves, is sacred to Siva, are described as being oblong, compressed, with a woolly mucous testa. That this most holy of trees should be regarded as springing from the testes of the unclean pig reveals the great gap that exists in some respects between tribal and orthodox Hindu thought.

of something else, we would be saved a lot of trouble.' One day they took their axes to Chakawar Hill. There they saw nothing but bamboo and thought, 'This might do.' They cut down a pole and removed the leaves and began to make baskets and fans. Other women too got to work and when they had made plenty they took them to Bamni bazaar for sale. They went home with plenty of money and soon they all were busy making things out of bamboos.[1]

32

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

The first Didayi boy—he was the only one in the whole world—was wandering through the jungle between Andrahal and Patroputtu. The Bondos caught him and carried him to a high place in the hills called Ranipadar. They decided to test whether his fate was good or bad, so they threw rice over him and left him alone, determining to return next day to see whether he had been eaten by a tiger or had died of cold. But during the night a house came into being of its own accord and in the morning the Bondos found the boy alive and well. From him many Didayis were born.

Years later a Didayi was cultivating his field in the valley south of Patroputtu. His wife brought him cooked fish and rice. Beside the path, where today stands a stone pillar, two clumps of bamboo were growing. On them was a parasite whose leaves looked like the feathers of a chicken. As the woman went along, it began to rain and she sheltered under the bamboo; when the rain stopped she went on to her husband and put the food before him. But when he came to eat it, he found the fish alive and the rice uncooked. He was angry and abused his wife, but she said it was not her fault but due to the touch of the parasite on

[1] The number of stories about the bamboo, of which the most common species in Koraput is *Dendrocalamus strictus,* Nees., indicates the importance of this tree to tribal economy. Bamboos are used in the construction of houses, for matting, baskets, winnowing-fans axe-handles, lance-shafts, fish-traps, fencing, looms, and—among the Koyas—for making the caps of their bison-horn head-dress. Young bamboo shoots are regarded as a great delicacy. See ch. XV, 23.

the bamboo. They went to the place and saw the parasite swing to and fro of its own accord. They went to Ranipadar and told the boy living there what had happened.

Soon afterwards, in a place near Bajurguda called Langua Padar where Bondos and Doras were living, a great quarrel arose between the two tribes and the Doras killed three out of every four Bondos so that only one in four of the Bondos remained alive. Those who survived climbed the hills to Ranipadar, for they thought that the Didayi boy who had so wonderfully escaped death might be able to help them. He went to the bamboo clumps and pulled up some poles; with these he touched the dead Bondos and they revived and drove the Doras away towards the east. Three or four memorial stones were erected at the place of battle, and one on the spot where the bamboos used to grow.

33

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

Before bamboos were made, men used to make everything with ordinary wood. One day under a *kusum* tree on the Kantamari Mountain a buffalo was born. From its head, the first bamboo grew like a great horn. The buffalo looked so fearsome that everyone who saw it ran away.

Now the buffalo believed that its fate was in the bamboo and that when it flowered it would be killed by a hunter. So when after twelve years the bamboo flowered,[1] it fled from the forest and wandered round the villages nearby destroying the crops. But nobody dared kill it for fear of the tree growing on its head.

But after a time it came to Bhuwawada village and proceeded to spoil the crop of one Sonia Sisa, which made him so angry that he decided to kill the animal whatever happened. He got his gun and chased the buffalo as far as the Kanji river and killed it there. He tore the bamboo out of its head and threw it on the bank.

[1] Although the bamboo may flower in isolated clumps fairly frequently, the general gregarious flowering (to which this story refers) occurs only at intervals of a number of years.

Soon other bamboos sprang up, but no one knew what to do with them and Rumrok himself had to come and explain how useful they were.

34

KAMAR

Kurchul (Khariar), Sambalpur District

Bhagavan called all the tribes and castes and divided the work of the world amongst them. But he forgot the Kamars. For they alone of all mankind failed to come at his summons. But afterwards when they heard what had been done they were angry and said, 'Everybody else has his work; only we have no work,' and they went into the jungle and sat down beneath a mango tree and wept. As they wept they picked the mangoes and ate them.

Hearing the sound of their weeping a Daitya came out of the jungle to see what was the matter. They told him what their trouble was and asked him how they were to earn their livelihood. The Daitya said, 'Don't worry. Bhagavan will certainly give you also some work to do.' So saying he went away back into the jungle. He cut some bamboo, split it into thin slats and made a basket. He put this, together with some bits of bamboo, by the path.

When the Kamars, having eaten their fill of mangoes, started to return home they saw the basket and the bits of bamboo. They first wondered what these things were, but then one of them said, 'This may be the work which Bhagavan has given us to do.' They took the bamboo and basket home. First of all they made a basket to hold mangoes and then every other kind of basket. Since then the Kamars have made things out of bamboo.

35

KOYA

Chirpalli, Koraput District

On Ingal Hill lived Poche the Kommar. He had no wife and no children. One day he went to find a wife. But when people saw this wild man, all naked as he was, they were frightened, for his organ was very long, twelve cubits at least, and he wore

it draped round his neck and waist. In every village he tried to get a wife, but the girls were terrified. At last he went home and thought, 'If I hadn't got such an enormous organ I'd be a happy man and the women wouldn't laugh at me.' He thought, 'I'll make it into something else and send it to every girl who rejected me.'

There was a stream. Poche untied and removed his organ and buried it on the bank. Soon a bamboo shoot appeared. When there was a big tall clump, Poche called a Konda Dora and said, 'Cut this bamboo and make winnowing-fans, baskets and mats and sell them in the bazaar.'

In this way, the women, who had despised Poche's organ, had to use it. The Konda Doras laughed at them saying, 'Now you always have to hold it and can do nothing without it.'

36

KOND

Koklanga, Ganjam District

In Irpiguda lived two Kond brothers, Midru and Tukli. One day they went to hunt. As they went through the jungle, the day passed and they got nothing. But in the evening on the way home they shot two horned hares. They thought, 'Let's cut up the flesh and hide it in the leaves, so that no one will know we have it.' They cut up the hares and roasted their entrails and legs and ate them and tied up the rest in leaves. As they went home Tukli said, 'Let's remove the horns and bury them here.' They buried the horns of the male and female separately. Tukli got water from the Sutiduki River and poured it over them and at once bamboo shoots sprang up. From the female came the slender bamboo and from the male came the stout bamboo.

In this way, bamboos began and hares lost their horns.

37

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

In Saphaganna when Nirantali was born, she brought up a

little bamboo plant in her hair from the Under World. When she came, she stood up and the bamboo fell to the ground and took root and grew. Then men and animals were born and Saphaganna became a very big village.

One day a great gale of wind blew and two of the bamboos rubbed together *khir-khir*. Nirantali heard them and felt queer. She came out of her house in a temper and pulled up the bamboos by the roots and threw them away. They flew through the air and fell on Kandawara Hill. There was wet earth; the bamboos fell, roots down, and stood upright and grew. Since then on this hill there has always been a great forest of bamboos.

38

PARENGA

Rajubidai, Koraput District

A man and his wife made their home in a hollow tree. The woman conceived, and one day when her husband was out hunting she gave birth to a child. She herself cut the cord and threw the placenta and cord down near the tree. Then she herself took the child somewhere.

When the man returned he found the tree deserted, but near by was growing a bamboo. He went shouting through the forest for his wife and when he had found her he took her back to the tree.

He showed her the bamboo. 'Where did that come from?' he asked. The woman was frightened and searched for the placenta and cord. When she could not find it, she said, 'This tree must have grown from the child's placenta. Look, it has knots in it, just as there are in the cord.'

39

PARENGA

Patarput, Koraput District

On Kotnimala Hill lived the twelve brothers and their sister. She was pregnant. The brothers went hunting and she stayed in the house. At the Pus Parab Festival the brothers went for

a hunt far away, and in their absence she gave birth to a child. She was all alone and the pain was so great that she lost her senses. As she lay there a crow flew down and carried off the placenta, trailing the cord below it.

Just then the brothers returned and one of them, seeing the crow flying with something in its beak, shot it down. The cord fell into the jungle and turned into a bamboo. This is why the bamboo has knots; it is like the cord from which it grew.

40

HILL SAORA

Busambo, Ganjam District

When men were born, Kittung caused grain to be born also for their nourishment. He collected a great store and began to distribute it. Though his wife was pregnant at this time, they both had to work very hard distributing the grain to men. One day when they had distributed most of it, and the woman's time was three months, a female child miscarried. Kittung tied it up in leaves and buried it in the place where people threw cowdung.

Ten years later, at the beginning of the rains, a bamboo sprang up. Kittung and his wife went to see it, remembering it was in this very place that they had buried the foetus. Kittung began to dig and when he reached the root of the bamboo he found it was growing from a bone. The woman cried, 'Our child has become a tree,' and wept. 'If only she had been born properly she'd be living and playing with us now.' Kittung said, 'Had she lived, she would have done all the work of a girl; so this tree too will do every kind of girl's work. It will make baskets, fans and mats.'

The Bombax Tree[1]

41

KAMAR

Pataora (Khariar), Sambalpur District

Durpatta was the wife of the five Pandava brothers. Every evening she used to massage each of them with oil. But for some reason Bhimsen did not approve of this.

So one day Bhimsen put a thick log of wood in his bed and covered it with a sheet and said to his servant, 'Go and call Durpattabai quickly; I have got fever and want her to massage me.' When the servant had gone, Bhimsen hid under the bed.

Durpatta came in a hurry; she did not remove the sheet, but at once proceeded to massage the figure on the bed. She worked on it till she was tired. Then at last she lifted the sheet and saw that there was nothing there but a log of wood. Under the bed Bhimsen burst out laughing. Durpatta cried in a temper, 'Let this wood henceforth grow thorns so that no one else will ever be able to massage it.' At once thorns sprouted all over the log and Bhimsen planted it in his garden and it grew up as a bombax tree.

Boswellia serrata, Roxb.[2]

42

KOYA

Phulimetla, Koraput District

There was a village. Ganga Koya lived there with his two wives. For a long while both were barren; then at last the younger wife had a daughter and two sons. After this Ganga neglected his elder wife. He made her do all the housework, even to looking after the children of the other woman. He gave the younger wife many ornaments, but never a thing to the elder, and used to go daily with the younger woman to work in the fields.

[1] *Bombax, malabaricum,* DG., a deciduous tree with large corky prickles on the stem and branches. See also ch. IX, 44 and ch. XIX, 10.

[2] A common tree conspicuous for its white and scaly look.

The poor elder wife was very miserable and took many medicines to remove her sterility, but it was no use. One day as she was wandering lonely through the woods she picked up a curious seed and took it home. Presently she threw it away in a place wet with the waste water from the kitchen.

In time a little tree sprang up and the woman poured over it the water in which she washed the rice. The tree grew strong and big and one day the woman said to her husband, 'Here is my son. Marry him to some good caste Brahmin or Komti. Your younger wife's children can marry Koyas and go on living in the jungle.' The husband thought, 'How can I do this?'

Kumar Singh Raja was preparing for his daughter's wedding. He sent his chaprasis to find an *ala* tree for the booth. They searched for a long time without success and then they came to the Koya's house. They saw the *ala* tree behind the kitchen and cut a branch and took it to the palace. The Koya went with the chaprasis and saw how they put the branch in the middle of the booth and the bride and bridegroom went round it and they placed marks of turmeric and vermilion upon it. The Koya thought, 'This is truly my son and the Raja has married him to my daughter.' He went home excited to tell his wife, but when he arrived he found she was dead.

The bark of the *ala* tree is white because of the rice-water which the poor woman poured over it every day.

Butea frondosa, Roxb.[1]

43

BHATTRA

Deodhara, Koraput District

Long ago in Jugniguda, Pengus, Bhattras and Murias lived together. The Chief of the village was Chaitu Bhattra; he had one son and one daughter. He sent his daughter to another village to be married, and arranged the marriage of his son.

[1] In Hindu tradition this beautiful tree is believed to have sprung from the feather of a falcon imbued with the immortal Soma. When the flowers come, the leaves drop back, and the top and outer branches stand out like sprays of unbroken scarlet. In the bud, the dark olive-green velvet of the calyx is scarcely less beautiful than the full flower (Watts, I, p. 548).

After his son's marriage, the Chief's wife died and the Chief himself went blind for weeping.

After a time the Chief's daughter-in-law fell in love with a Muria boy. The villagers got to know of it and told the husband. Angry and jealous, he tried to catch the lovers. One day he ate his food, tied his clothes in a bundle, took his stick and told his wife, 'I'm going to my sister's house for a bit and will return in two to three days.' So saying he went away. His wife was pleased at the idea of his absence. But the husband went only a little way; he hid in the forest and at night returned to watch.

When everyone was asleep, the Muria youth went to the wife and the two lay together. The husband entered the house and killed the lovers with his sword. He picked up the corpses and threw them out of the house; the blood flowed and joined in a single stream. From it grew a tree and when it was large, young men used to look at it. Flowers came and were red and black, red for the young lover, black for the girl. This was the first *parsa* tree.

44

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

Originally, when the Gadabas erected stones for the dead, they did not also plant trees for them.

There was a certain shaman, whose wife was a shamanin. The shaman died first and then his widow. The villagers buried them side by side. A year later they erected stones for them, sacrificing a buffalo for the shaman and a she-buffalo for the shamanin. They put the two heads of the buffaloes by the stones and danced before them all night long. In the morning they found that a *simli*[1] tree had grown from the buffalo's head and a *palda*[2] tree had grown from the she-buffalo's.

Ever since we have planted these trees beside the menhir stones. This causes the ghosts to die and then they give us no more trouble. For the ghost comes into the buffalo and when we kill

[1] *Bombax malabaricum*, DC. [2] *Butea frondosa*, Roxb.

the buffalo we kill the ghost. Until a ghost dies it cannot be mingled with the gods.[1]

THE CREEPER, *Bauhinia vahlii*, W. et A.

45

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

Cholera once came to a village on the slopes of Borandi Hill. The people sacrificed to Mardi Deota, the cholera-god, but he would not go away, for he said, 'I want a buffalo to eat.'

So after a great deal of discussion, the villagers brought a buffalo to the boundary of the place and sacrificed it. They skinned it and removed the liver and intestines. Some little boys took the intestines to wash in a stream. They pulled at them and they stretched out very long and became stiff. The boys were frightened and dropped them and ran away. They came home and told their elders about it. When the people went to look, they found that the intestines had turned into a *siari* creeper.[2]

46

HILL SAORA

Thodrangu, Koraput District

One day Ramma wanted to eat some meat. He removed the entrails from the belly of a she-goat and made a trap for birds. He cut up the gall-bladder to use the bits as bait. He took the trap to the jungle, put it in the ground, spread branches over it

[1] The Gadabas celebrate a series of funeral feasts for their dead. The two *tigab* ceremonies on the third and tenth days after death are obligatory for all, but only rich people can afford the *Gota mela* memorial feast which is given a year or more later. This is marked by the sacrifice of buffaloes, the erection of stone menhirs and the planting of trees equal in number to the sacrificial buffaloes. For a full account of this rite, see Fürer-Haimendorf, 'Megalithic Ritual', pp. 152 ff. The use of the *simli* in a funeral ceremony may be due to Hindu influence, for this tree is Yamadruma, the tree of Yama, god of the dead.

[2] This gigantic creeper is of great value to the tribesmen; they prepare rope from its fibres and use the leaves for cups and platters. The heart-shaped leaves, which are a full span across, are also made into leaf-hats and umbrellas.

and scattered the bait all round. Birds flew down to eat, but were caught in the trap. Many birds were caught in this way. Presently Kittung saw them and said, 'Who made this?' He broke the trap with his axe and said, 'Let all these birds become fruit and the cords turn into a vine and the bladder become leaves.' So the thing became a *siari* vine and the birds became its fruit.

When Ramma came and found his trap had turned into a vine, he broke the pods and leaves and took them to Kittung, saying, 'I wanted some meat and made a trap, but look what's happened. Now how am I to get some meat?' Kittung said, 'I made your trap into a new tree, for I didn't know it was yours. But if you roast the seeds and eat the kernels, you won't want meat, and the leaves will serve for your sacrifices Its rope will be very useful, even better than a meal of meat.'[1]

The Creeper, *Cuscuta reflexa*, Roxb.

47

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Sambalpur District

We Kamars are the descendants of a Risi and in the old days we used to wear a sacred thread. Formerly, because we lived high in the hills, people called us Paharia; but after we took to working in bamboo they called us Kamar.

We were proud of wearing the sacred thread, but it had one disadvantage. When we went to cut bamboo in the forest, the threads used to catch in the branches of shrubs and trees. So one day we held a tribal gathering and decided to give up wearing the threads. We took them off and hung them up all together on a certain tree. We offered sacrifice before them and begged their pardon for thus abandoning them. 'Put far from us,' we said, 'disease and sorrow. Live on this tree in peace.'

[1] The seeds are eaten raw or cooked. They are found in huge pods, which look like strips of thick undressed leather: these are roasted until they split open and the soft flat seeds, a rich glossy brown in colour, can be removed. For their use as food, see ch. XXIX, 4. See also ch. XIX, 12 and ch. XXVI, 2.

Next time one of us went that way he found that the threads had turned into the *amarbel* creeper.

48

KOYA

Tamsa, Koraput District

When men were first born, they lived on an island in the middle of the sea. But soon they increased in number and had no room to live. So Deur made boats and took them across the sea to another land.

On the island only two houses of Brahmins remained. Deur went to them and took one of them away with him. He kept him three days in his house. While he was there one of Deur's cows died. Deur wanted to throw the carcass away but there was no one to do it, so he called the Brahmin and told him to eat the flesh. He said, 'You've eaten good food all these days, but you've had no meat; come, let us eat the flesh of this cow together. You drag the carcass by the tail into the garden and I'll bring water and wood.'

The Brahmin dragged the carcass out and Deur said, 'Take off your thread and hang it on this banyan tree while we eat.' The Brahmin hung his sacred thread on the tree and cut up the flesh of the cow while Deur brought everything and the Brahmin cooked. When it was ready Deur said, 'You are a Brahmin and must eat first; I'll have it afterwards.' But when he had eaten, Deur said, 'Don't go to the tree or touch your thread. From today you will be a Dom and live on beef.'

Deur threw the water of life over the thread and it turned into an *amarbel* creeper.

Ebony

49

HILL SAORA

Busambo, Ganjam District

When the earth sank down below the flood, a Kond and his

wife hid inside a gourd. They took a bundle of wood with them. They stayed there a long time unconscious. When they came to their senses, the gourd broke open and the water dried up and a new world was made. They came out of the gourd and with its wood the Kond lit a fire and they slept by it.

Next day they went somewhere, leaving the burnt wood behind. This wood turned into an ebony tree.[1] Next day the Kond returned to get some fire and saw the burnt wood had grown into a tree. He was pleased and went home. He picked some cotton and pulled it out and put the skin on the tree. This became its fruit. The tree's name is *tarel,* and its wood is black because it came from a charred bit of gourd.

50

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

Manglo Saora lived on Mahendragiri Mountain. He had five sons and three daughters. One day when they were all cutting trees in their clearing on the hillside, a snake bit the youngest girl and she died. She was unmarried, though her two elder sisters had husbands. The parents decided that the girl should be buried in the clearing at the very place where she had died. In due time they performed the funerary ceremonies.

From the grave there grew an ebony tree. When the tree was five years old, the ghost of the girl came to the parents in a dream and said, 'An ebony tree has grown out of my body. Do not eat the fruit yourselves, but tell the husbands of my two sisters about it.' Next day the father went to the clearing and saw the tree and the ripe fruit on its branches. He called his two sons-in-law and told them to pick and eat the fruit. They did so. Since that day there have been ebony trees in the forest.

[1] *Diospyros melanoxylon,* Roxb. The black heartwood of this tree, though not the true jet-black ebony, is widely used in India. It will be noticed that both stories in the text attribute its origin to burning, in one case to a charred gourd, in the other to the cremated body of a girl. In a Muria legend, the ebony tree turned black when Lingo touched it on his escape from his ordeal by fire. (See my *The Muria and their Ghotul,* p. 247.)

Fig Trees

51

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

The Muria Chief of Kosalaguda had two unmarried daughters. No one came for them, but the younger girl made love with the son of the village watchman and wanted to marry him. There was great love between them and after a time the watchman went to the Muria Chief's house to ask for the girl. He spoke, however, of the elder girl. When the conversations were finished, the younger girl was frightened. 'It is with me that he does love,' she thought, 'but perhaps he'll marry my sister.' So she thought, 'I'll run away with him and marry him in another village.' In order to get enough oil for the marriage, she daily took a little oilseed from the house and hid it in some wild figs. One day her elder sister saw what she was doing and quarrelled with her and said, 'Even though I am going to marry your old lover, you still want to have him. But I'll see that none of these things you've put aside for the marriage will be for you.' She took a little dust from her foot and threw it over the figs and the oilseed turned into insects.

Ever since tiny insects have been found in the wild fig.[1]

52

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

At the Chait Parab Festival a certain priest sacrificed a white fowl by the side of a path in the name of Mahaprabhu. After the sacrifice, he took out the crop and put it aside. He cooked the meat and some rice, offered it to the god and went home. A fig tree grew from the bird's crop. Figs are full of seeds as a bird's crop is full of grain.

[1] This is so: the fruit of *Ficus glomerata,* Roxb., though edible, is usually too full of insects to suit the taste of human beings, and is left to deer and monkeys. Cf. ch. XIV, 46.

53

KAMAR

Pataora (Khariar), Sambalpur District

One day Mahadeo gave a great feast, at which he served his guests with many kinds of sweets. He himself sat down with the human beings and ate the sweets with much enjoyment.

Next morning, when Mahadeo went to ease himself, he found that he passed nothing but sweets, beautiful sweets, red sweets, yellow sweets, white sweets. He left them lying in a heap on the ground and went away. In time there grew up from these sweets a pipal tree.[1]

One day Mahadeo passed by and saw the tree. 'This tree,' he said to himself, 'grew up from the sweets I passed the day after I ate so much at that feast. Let the fruit of the tree also be sweet and plentiful.'

54

KOND

Sikerguda, Kalahandi District

Once when Paramugatti was hunting, he felt very hungry and said to his companions, 'Get me something to eat, for I'm very hungry.' When they searched they found nothing but wild figs. In those days the fig tree could talk like a human being. Paramugatti said, 'I'm very hungry; give me fruit and I'll eat it.' The tree said, 'I'll only give it to you if you salute me.' Paramugatti said, 'I'm an old man, how can I salute you?' The tree said, 'Then I won't give you anything.' Paramugatti asked his friends to persuade the tree to feed him. But it still refused and at last Paramugatti had to salute it. Then it gave him a fig and he ate and filled his belly. But he was so angry that he

[1] *Ficus religiosa,* Linn. The most sacred tree in India, the *bodhi* tree of the Buddha: 'the roots are Brahma, the bark Vishnu, the branches Mahadeo.' It is not specially reverenced, however, by the tribesmen and the Muria story (ch. IX, 58) actually makes it the Ganda, an untouchable, of the trees. The leaf has a very slender petiole which makes it oscillate readily in the slightest breeze, a fact to which reference is made in two stories. See also ch. XIX, 13.

picked another fig, broke it open, pulled out one of his pubic hairs and put it into the fruit.

He told the tree, 'From today your fruit will be full of insects and you won't be able to talk.' The fig tree wept, but nothing could help it now.

55

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

When Nirantali was born in Saphaganna, she brought with her from below some banyan[1] seeds wrapped in leaves. When the earth and the clouds were ready and men were born, the Sun and Moon shone on them and they felt very hot. They had nothing for shade, so they planted seeds in front of their houses. In fifteen days trees grew up and in four years they were very big. But in those days trees only had tiny leaves which did not give enough shade. Wild animals, cows, goats and pigs sought for shade as well as men. Then Nirantali picked a leaf and pulled it and pulled it all ways till it was large enough. She pulled the branches till they came down to the ground and rooted there.

At that time too there was no proper food, so Nirantali said to the tree. 'Feed men with your milk.' The banyan said, 'I've only blood in my body; where is the milk?' Nirantali hit the tree with her axe and said, 'Let milk come.' Milk flowed from the cut and men caught it in their mouths. They lived on this till grain came to the world.

56

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

One day, Nirantali was cooking by the roadside. She was just

[1] *Ficus bengalensis,* Linn. This is the largest and most important of the Indian fig trees, characterized by the great horizontal branches from which aerial roots go down to root in the ground. These are mentioned in the text, as is the milky juice, which is regarded as a useful remedy for toothache, rheumatism and lumbago. See also ch. XXVI, 1.

going to help herself to the food when a crow flew down and snatched it away. Nirantali was very annoyed and tried to catch the bird, but it escaped. As it flew away, it let its droppings fall. When Nirantali saw them like small millet, she turned them into the seeds of the fig tree.

57

KUTTIA KOND

Kudimila, Ganjam District

At first there were no trees or shrubs, and the earth looked ugly and naked without any ornament. Rani-aru went to the place where she had been born and found a pipal fig. She put it behind her house. Two months later a shoot came up; she tended it carefully and in twenty years it was mature. When it was about to bear fruit, the tree said to Rani-aru, 'I have all this fruit on my body; what am I to do with it?' She said, 'Birds will eat your fruit and from their bellies seeds will drop and trees will spring up everywhere.' The tree said, 'Call them quickly, for I am weighed down by this burden.' Rani-aru called the birds and they sat on the tree and ate and then flew to the surrounding hills and new trees grew from their droppings. Rani-aru gave Maili Pinnu a place to live in this tree and even without wind its leaves tremble as fans to keep him cool.

58

MURIA

Banuaguda, Koraput District

When men, animals and trees were made, men slowly increased in number and made their homes here and there in the jungle. Mahaprabhu made Chalika the Raja of men and established the Government. He made a Chief and watchman for each village. He made chiefs and watchmen also for the animals. But he forgot to make a Raja of the trees.

One day on Hemagiri Mountain the trees assembled and complained that Mahaprabhu had made a Government for everyone else, but not for them. Bhima came and asked what they were

doing and when they told him, Bhima asked which of the trees was the strongest. He tried each in turn and each broke easily, but the tamarind resisted and Bhima declared it to be the strongest. Bhima went to Mahaprabhu and told him about the trees.

Mahaprabhu went to Hemagiri and called the trees and made the tamarind their Raja and the banyan his Mantri and the *sarai* the Chief and the pipal the Ganda watchman, saying to the pipal, 'Whenever any wind comes, warn the other trees.' That is why this tree shakes its leaves to let the other trees know when even a little wind is in the air.

59

HILL SAORA

Bungding, Koraput District

Satiya and Nambo, two brothers, lived on the Manjul Hill. In those days there was no grain anywhere. The whole world lived on fruit and roots. But when the people increased in number, there were not enough roots to go round. Kittung came to the two brothers and said, 'There are not enough roots for all these people. If you will bring grain to birth, all will be well.' The brothers replied, 'But where are we to find grain? We have no seed.' Kittung took them to the Mandarjan Hill and showed them how to use the digging-stick. He found a flower of the wild fig tree and in this flower was every kind of grain. They sowed the seed and learnt which kind of seed was which. Since then there has been grain in the world, but no one can ever find the flower of the wild fig.

60

HILL SAORA

Liabo, Ganjam District

Before the creation of the world, Kittung and his sister used to live in a gourd. When the new world was made and the gourd broke open, brother and sister came out and made their home on Kurabeli Hill. There were no trees on the earth at that time and the two had to sleep in the open under the sky. One

night while they were asleep, a mountain squirrel bit off four of the fingers of Kittung's left hand. Only the third finger remained. Kittung woke with the pain and cried; his sister also woke and cried.

When the hot weather came, the girl said, 'How can I live in this heat when there is no shade?' Kittung cut off his maimed left hand, and put it on a stone. It soon grew into a tree and gave shade beneath which Kittung's sister sheltered. This was the pipal, which has one finger in the middle of its leaves and grows on rocks in the forest.

The Jackfruit[1]

61

GADABA

Surgunnaput, Koraput District

A goddess called Sarbosattijhola had seven brothers. Their names were Koramunda, Sitalganda, Lenduka, Penduka, Matulmanda, Chutulgunda and Silmanda. They were all married and had children. But Sarbosattijhola had no husband, for she had feet like those of an elephant. They were so heavy that when she went into the house, they broke up the floor. She was so lazy that after a meal she used to relieve herself in the very place where she was sitting. The brothers got very tired of this and one day they turned her out, and she had to go and live by a spring.

After some time Sarbosattijhola conceived of her own accord; she had never known a man. After nine or ten months she gave birth to twelve little pigs and they clung to her breasts and took her milk. As they drank the sucklings said, 'Where is our home? Where is our father?' Their mother replied, 'You have no father.

[1] The *Artocarpus integrifolia*, Linn., or jackfruit, is a large tree with a fine dome of dark-green foliage, bearing enormous green ovoid and oblong fruits with a tubercled surface. The association of the jackfruit (see also another Gadaba story, ch. I, 28) with the sow may be due to the shape and size of the fruits which might be held to resemble sucklings, and to its unpleasant smell. When cut, the bark of this tree exudes a milky juice, to which reference is made in the Saora story (ch. IX, 63). The suggestion in the next story (62) that the tree came from seeds buried with the entrails and dung of a goat is interesting in view of the fact that the tribesmen cultivate the jackfruit by burying the seed in a pit filled with dung.

But I have seven brothers and because of my great feet they drove me out; they will not even give me food to eat.' The little pigs said to one another, 'These uncles of ours are great rascals, to trouble our poor mother like this. Let us go to their fields and eat the grain which they refuse to give her.' So thinking, they went to Koramunda's field and ate his grain. Next morning, when Koramunda went to his field, he found his crop destroyed. The next night, the little pigs went to Sitalganda's field and ate his grain. In the morning, when Sitalganda went to his field, he too found his crop destroyed. This happened to each brother in turn, but the pigs did not eat the grain of the youngest brother, Silmanda. He had grain in his field.

The brothers said to each other, 'Whatever creature it is that has ruined our crops may attack Silmanda's also, and then we shall die of hunger.' To save the crop all seven brothers kept watch. The pigs came but the brothers saw them and drove them away. They ran to their mother and clung to her breasts. The brothers drove ten of the pigs away, but Silmanda caught the two that were left. The others wanted to kill them, but Silmanda said, 'No, let us keep them; they will grow and when they are big enough we'll kill and eat them.'

Then the brothers said, 'If our sister goes on having so many children, we will never get our crops. We had better kill her.' But again Silmanda said, 'No, that would be a sin. Instead let us cut off her breasts and seal her organ with a wooden nail.' So they cut off her breasts and sealed her organ with a wooden nail.

But Sarbosattijhola was already pregnant. When her time came, she tried to deliver her children, but she was sealed. Her belly swelled and swelled and at last it burst open and through her navel came a jackfruit tree. The little pigs in her womb turned into its fruit. But the mother died.

62

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

Gadejangboi Kittung had a daughter whose name was Pandai. This girl had a pet goat in whose belly were the seeds of the jack-

fruit tree. The girl loved her goat as if it was her husband and took it with her wherever she went.

When her mother realized how much Pandai loved her goat, she thought, 'When the other Kittungs and the gods hear about this they'll laugh at us and say that the girl is married to a goat.' So she made her daughter ill and said to the goat, 'Go and fetch the shaman to cure her.'

As it was going along, the goat met a herd of other goats and she-goats and went to graze with them. When Gadejangboi saw that the shaman was not coming, she herself went in the form of a tiger and killed the goat. She ate all of it except the entrails. Then she resumed her own form and only realized when it was too late that she had not completely finished eating the goat. 'Pandai,' she thought, 'will quarrel with me if she sees this.' So she dug a hole and buried the entrails with the dung and presently from the seeds hidden there a jackfruit tree grew up.

63

HILL SAORA

Kamalasingi, Koraput District

Sarku Saora, who lived in Kodigadjang, had a wife and two sons. The boys grew up and one day the wife conceived and in time bore a third son. When the baby was six months old, the mother got a sore on her breast and her milk went sour. Sarku called the shaman and tried every kind of medicine but it was no use.

Milk dripped from the wound and Sarku picked it up and buried it behind the house. After a short time the woman died and they did the Guar ceremony for her. From the buried milk grew a jackfruit tree. In one year it grew up, in the second year it bore fruit. Then the ghost came to Sarku and said, 'Feed my baby on the milk of this tree.'

The Mango Tree[1]

64

GADABA

Kujambo, Koraput District

In Matiyamunda lived a Jhoria named Gangu. He had no wife or child, for he had never married. One day he fell ill and lay sick for a year until he died. The neighbours thought, 'If we bury him near the village, his virgin ghost will give us a lot of trouble.' So they carried the body far away, to Mongridongar Hill, and dug a great pit there and laid the body in the bottom with no earth to cover it, and then ran away as quickly as they could without once looking round.

Animals soon devoured the body, but they left the two testicles untouched. A mango tree was born from them and in five years it bore fruit. Then the ghost of Gangu gave a dream to the Chief of Matiyamunda and told him that 'in the place where you left my body, Mahaprabhu has prepared a tree which bears a very sweet fruit'. The Chief went to the place and found the fruit hanging from the tree. He picked and ate it, and enjoyed its sweetness. He gathered a basketful of the fruit and took it home for the neighbours.

65

KOND

Rodigumma, Ganjam District

Long ago a Kond and his wife went to Mardisoru Hill and built a house and lived there. After some time the Kond's wife conceived and in due course a son was born. When he grew up,

[1] *Mangifera indica,* Linn. Gadaba and Kond stories associate the mango with the human testile which the seed somewhat resembles: a Parenga story (ch. IX, 82) derives it from a goat's testicle. A Bondo story (ch. XXIV, 2) says that death came to the world through the mango, and in Gadaba and Bondo practice mourners at a funeral have to step over mango bark before they may return home. Gadabas also use mango branches in a prophylactic rite to avert disease from a village. All the tribes observe a Mango First Fruits festival, before which it is taboo to eat the fruit.

the parents wanted to arrange his marriage and the father went to the Chief of Ojigudda, to ask for his daughter.

But in the very month when the marriage was to take place, the boy fell ill and died within a week. As he died he said, 'Don't burn me, but bury me by the house.' The father obeyed the boy's last wish and called the neighbours for his funeral. Six months later a mango tree grew out of the grave and grew tall in the wind and sun. After five years there was fruit and so heavily were the branches laden that they hung down to the ground. The Kond went to Bura Pinnu and told him about it.

Bura Pinnu said, 'This is your son: eat this fruit and if you sell it you'll get some money.' The Kond went home, ate some of the fruit and sold the rest. Gradually he grew rich, helped by his son's tree.

66

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

Tana Pinnu had one son. She spent her days tilling her clearing. One day her son went hunting and came to a fig tree which was laden with ripe fruit. He climbed up and began to eat the figs. A bear came by and asked the boy to throw him down some. The boy showed it his own eggs and said, 'Here are a couple of figs! How about them?' The bear said, 'I'll eat them with pleasure.' The boy said, 'No, no, I was only joking. I'd certainly rather give you figs.' He came down with some figs in his hand but the bear snatched at his eggs and ate them. The boy died in great pain. Next day the bear excreted the eggs, undigested, just as they were, and from them grew a mango tree. After a time Tana Pinnu came to the spot and saw her son dead and wept for him. She asked the bear what had happened and it told her. Tana Pinnu said, 'Very well, but whenever you eat a mango, the seed will come in your droppings as the eggs did.'

67

KUTTIA KOND

Kalanguda, Ganjam District

Rani-aru and Beni-aru were born in Saphaganna. As they came out of the earth they brought with them a wax mango kernel tied up in sago-palm bark. When the earth and clouds were made, Rani-aru and Beni-aru took the kernel to Dimbul Hill and planted it there, telling it to spring up during the rains and bear fruit after fifteen years. They returned home and after fifteen years went to see their tree. It was heavy with fruit and they picked and ate some and threw the seeds away, and many trees grew from them. Five years later, there was a bad famine, people were dying of hunger everywhere. Beni-aru and Rani-aru told them to go to Dimbul Hill and eat mangoes. The people crowded to the place and gathered the fruit. They ate the skin and flesh and then husked the kernels and made the flour into gruel.[1]

68

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

Sukru Saora was rich and many people came to his daughter's wedding. They sat before the house and drank and danced. Suddenly a gust of wind blew a mango seed into the midst of the company. They looked at it, but nobody knew what it was. Sukru took it to his house and in the rains planted it in his garden. A tree sprang up and in five months it was tall as a man. Sukru called it the *udān* tree, for it had come flying. When it gave fruit, Sukru's dead father came in a dream and said, 'This is a good fruit, fit to eat; look after it carefully.'

[1] The tribesmen use every part of the mango fruit. When unripe, they cut it into strips and eat it with salt and chilli. When ripe, they suck out the sweet juice. They pound the seeds into flour, which they use for gruel and *chapati*. The Kuttia Konds first break up the seeds: they call the pieces Raja. The flour is Rani. They have a story that long ago Grain was frightened at the voracious habits of men and ran away to the Mango. The Mango said, 'Do not be afraid. In me live the Raja and Rani, and when there is not enough other food, my Raja and Rani will come out to care for men.'

69

HILL SAORA

Kinteda, Ganjam District

Kittung used to live in Badong Hill and many Saoras went to sacrifice to him. Bajai the shaman always used to go there with the rest. But one year he failed to go, for he was busy, and the next year he forgot and Kittung was angry with him and made him ill. Bajai hastily took a goat and a fowl and went with all his relatives to the hill and sacrificed there. They drank liquor, cooked meat-rice and after offering some to Kittung they feasted together. After the feast they went home but they left the goat's thigh-bone behind. Next day when Kittung went to piss he stumbled over the bone. He picked it up and said, 'They've not eaten this: what fools they are!' He buried it in his tobacco garden, and in time it turned into a mango tree.

70

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

There was a famous Chief. But Uyungsum attacked him and burnt his body with his heat. The shaman examined him and said, 'You must sacrifice an egg.' For Uyungsum had said, 'When he gives me an egg, his body will be cooled.' The shaman buried the egg on the bank of a stream. Uyungsum said, 'These Saoras don't know me: they say there is no Uyungsum. Now let there be a mango tree here and they will all recognize my power. The fruit will be like an egg: when unripe you must remove the skin; when ripe it will be yellow inside; it will be sweet to taste as an egg.'

Ougeinia dalbergioides, Benth.[1]

71

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Sambalpur District

Father Mahadeo fought against Basmasur Daitya and beat him till the blood poured from his body. But Mahadeo caught the blood and put it on the *tinsa* tree. For he feared that if any of the blood fell on human beings they would be turned to ashes. This is why the *tinsa* tree is the colour of blood. If men touch the tree, they take no harm; but if clothes get stained by the sap they bear the stain till they are worn out. There is no means of cleaning them.

The Plantain

72

GADABA

Surgunnaput, Koraput District

Mango, Tamarind, Fig, Black Plum and Plantain—these five were girls in the old days. When they grew up a little, the sisters went dancing from village to village; they danced and they looked for husbands. But no one wanted to marry them.

Ispur Mahaprabhu thought, 'If I don't get husbands for these girls, it will be a sin for me.' He went to see them, and asked Mango, 'What do you really want?' She replied, 'I want a husband and many children.' He went to Tamarind and asked her, 'What do you really want?' She replied, 'I want a husband and many children.' Fig and Black Plum told him the same thing, but when he asked Plantain, she said, 'I don't want a husband, but I do want children, many of them, all at once. And I want to become old straight away, without waiting a long time.' Ispur Mahaprabhu promised that it should be as they desired, and he went away.

[1] An astringent red gum, rather like Dragon's Blood, is exuded from the bark of this tree when it is cut. In a Bhattra story, (ch. IX, 83), the gum gets its colour when the menstruating Lightning Maiden goes to live in the tree. It is generally taboo for a woman to touch the tree during her period.

So these four sisters each got many husbands and had many children, more than there were hairs on their heads. But when they saw so many children, the husbands were frightened and went away. The mothers were for following them, but the children caught hold of them and would not let them go. Ispur Mahaprabhu came to see what was happening and the sisters said to him, 'Save us or we will be destroyed by these children.'

Ispur Mahaprabhu turned the sisters into trees. Their hair turned into branches and the children became the fruits. 'But now,' he said, 'what will you do for husbands?' 'Anyone who climbs us will be our husband,' they replied. So men are the husbands of trees.

But the youngest sister, Plantain, has no husband, and she grows old in a year.[1]

73

GOND

Chhindiguda, Koraput District

When Ol Raja and Ol Rani died, their bones rested where they died. One day Mikka Bhattra's wife came from Salkaguda to that place for wood. As they searched for it, they found the bones and recognized them as Ol Raja's. They tied the bone of one leg with their faggots and the Bhattra buried it in a pit near his fence. But in the rains the bone became green and leaves sprouted from it and in four months it became very large. The Bhattra said, 'Ol Raja was a large man, with large hands; that is why these leaves are so large.' Many people came to see them and the Bhattra told them proudly, 'It's grown up from a bone.' But they did not believe him.

When the fruit came they picked it while still unripe and it was like a root, so they said, 'This is a *kadili* tree.'[2] After it had borne fruit, the tree fell and died and they said, 'As Ol Raja was born once and then died, so this tree is born and dies.'

[1] Tribal story-tellers stress two aspects of the plantain, its big leaves and its habit of dying after once bearing fruit. Women who bear only one child are called 'plantain-sterile'. See also ch. XII, 2 and ch. XIX, 12.

[2] A sort of pun on *kanda,* root.

74

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

One year long ago, during the Chait Parab Festival, the boys and girls of a certain village danced so vigorously that they fell senseless to the ground. The villagers, in alarm, called the shaman to see what was the matter. But he was not able to do anything.

That night the shaman called on the names of all the gods and offered incense. He slept and in a dream heard a sound as of a horse galloping. He awoke and went out and saw Pat Deota sword in hand riding round the village. The shaman stood dumb with fear. But Pat Deota greeted him and said, 'I have come to your village after many years, but you have given me nothing to eat or drink. That is why your boys and girls are lying unconscious.' The shaman said, 'But what do you want? What can we give you?' Pat Deota said, 'I will eat goat's flesh on plantain leaves. Give me this and your children will recover.'

Now the shaman had a goat, but he did not know what a plantain was, so how could he give the leaves? He went to find some, and on the way he met Thakurani Mata and she asked him where he was going. Again the shaman was struck dumb with fear. But she said, 'I know all about it. But you are never going to get plantain leaves this way. You will only get them if you sacrifice your own daughter to me.' The shaman did not say a word. The goddess said, 'Don't be afraid. If you do as I say, your daughter will receive great honour and will live in the houses of Government and great Rajas and wherever there are temples.'[1]

The shaman returned home and roused his daughter. This girl had a baby son. She immediately understood that her father was going to sacrifice her and began to laugh. The shaman was frightened, but the girl said, 'Don't be afraid. Take me quickly.'

The shaman, therefore, took his daughter to the shrine of Thakurani Mata and sacrificed her. From her blood sprang up

[1] Plantains are worshipped by the Hindus, and their branches are placed at the entrances of houses at marriages to symbolize fertility and plenty.

plantain trees. The shaman picked the leaves and gave goat's meat to Pat Deota on them, and the boys and girls recovered.

Because the girl had one son and died, a plantain dies after it has given fruit once. And today since it grew from the girl's blood, the plantain is loved in temples and palaces.

75

KOND

Palki, Kalahandi District

Nirantali went one day to visit someone. Her host got a fowl and a pig to feast her and brought her palm-wine. Nirantali got very drunk; when she returned home, she quarrelled with Paramugatti. He said, 'What is the matter with you?' He was angry and went to cut down the palm which had caused the quarrel. Nirantali followed and picked up a fruit of the palm and planted the seed in her garden saying, 'Now let us see what kind of flower will come.' It was a plantain that sprang up, with broad leaves like the spadix of a palm. Because the plantain is from the palm, its fruit is sweet as palm-wine.

76

KUTTIA KOND

Kudimila, Ganjam District

At first there were no trees. As men increased in number there was not enough land for them. In those days men and women lived naked and they suffered greatly in the heat of the sun. Rani-aru thought, 'We must give men shade and clothing.' She took some dirt from her arm and saying, 'This is a plantain seed,' put it in the ground. From this came a tree and Rani-aru told it to give big leaves so that men could shelter beneath them. At first the leaves were big as a threshing-floor and gave plenty of shade, but Rani-aru wanted clothing as well. So she taught men to pick the leaves and dress in them. She also showed them how to cook in them. After this all the other trees were born.

77

PARENGA

Patarput, Koraput District

A Dom lived in a Parenga village. The Parenga women wove their clothes from bark yarn, but the Dom's wife wove her clothes from cotton. The Parenga's clothes lasted longer, but the Dom's looked clean and white.

An old Parenga had a son who had recently married and was due to go and fetch his wife from her mother's house. He wanted to look his best and asked his mother to give him some cotton cloth. She did not want to do so, but he persuaded her and ultimately she gave him some to wear just for that once.

When the youth returned with his bride, his fine white clothes looked very dirty, for there had been a great feast and a dance. He asked his wife to wash them. But as she dipped the cotton cloth in water, it became hard and stood up straight. She was terrified and threw it away and ran home to fetch her husband. When he came he saw that it had turned into a plantain tree.

78

PARENGA

Malikot, Koraput District

Before men were born Mahaprabhu and Basindei came to earth. At that time the earth was wet but they made it dry. Then they tried to make men: together they fashioned dolls, male and female, but they did not give them any teeth. Men could only eat soft ripe fruit. When the population increased, Mahaprabhu made grain and told the people to eat it. But when they tried, it hurt their mouths. Mahaprabhu decided to make teeth: he used earth and stone, but it was no use. At last ashamed he took some plantain seeds and turned them into teeth: they stuck like bits of stone in the mouth and never fell out. But Mahaprabhu thought, 'Now I have used up all the seeds, how will we have any plantains?' So he said to the plantain, 'You will produce new plants from your roots, not from seeds.'

79

HILL SAORA

Abbasingi, Ganjam District

Ramma and Bimma lived on Mahendragiri. One day they quarrelled and Bimma went to live alone in another village. He was very fond of parrots and used to catch as many as he could and keep them as pets. When Ramma heard of this he started keeping mynas. Bimma planted a plantain; it grew well and gave a lot of fruit.

One day Ramma's servant came to Bimma to see what was going on. He talked a lot against Ramma, saying that he had been dismissed from his service, and Bimma was pleased and gave him a cluster of plantains to eat. The servant went back and told Ramma about the tree. In his garden, therefore, Ramma planted a tamarind tree. Its leaves grew bigger than those of the plantain and it bore more fruit. When Bimma heard of it, he sent his parrots one night and they tore the leaves to shreds. Ramma was very angry and sent his mynas to strip the plantain leaves. But the leaves were too tough for them, so Ramma cursed the tree saying, 'From henceforth you will bear one lot of fruit and then die.'

The Black Plum[1]

80

KOYA

Tondapalli, Koraput District

In Sursamgarh City lived Kamodsai Raja. He was the strongest of all Rajas and an expert shot. He quarrelled with the neighbouring princes and took their kingdoms into his control. He had one son called Kalsai. The boy grew up and married and six years afterwards the Raja gave the throne to him.

[1] *Eugenia jambolana*, Lam. This is one of the trees not usually cut by the tribesmen. The stories revolve about the fancied resemblance of the small black plums to bullets or goat's droppings. The Hindu god Megh was transformed into this tree, and the dark colour of the fruit is said to have made it very dear to Krishna.

One day shortly after this, Kamodsai felt a desire to go hunting. He took ten chaprasis with him and went to Kandongar and hunted till evening but got nothing. As he came home, he found two deer grazing on the edge of the forest. He shot and killed one of them. The bullet passed right through the animal's body and buried itself one foot deep in the ground. The Raja tried to get it, but failed and as night was falling he picked up the deer and hastened home. Five days later he returned to get the bullet and found a *nendi* tree growing with plums just like bullets and many birds eating them. When the Raja saw this, he was astonished and he too picked the fruit and ate it. He found it very sweet and said, 'Let all creatures enjoy this fruit.'

81

KUTTIA KOND

Patarput, Koraput District

Rani and Beni brought a honey-comb from below the earth: they ate the honey and made a little black ball with the wax. Rani put it in her right ear. Many days later, the ear began to itch and Rani took the ball out and planted it on Nachikeri Hill.

Next year Rani found two trees growing from the wax as from a seed and both bearing fruit. She picked one of the fruits and ate it and went home. The fruit of the tree she ate was small and she called the birds to eat it. This is the bird-plum: the other was the man-plum.

82

PARENGA

Patarput, Koraput District

There was a Dom and his wife. These two were very much in love with each other. Mahaprabhu had a goat—in those days the goat had four testes—which he had kept tied up for twelve years. One day when Mahaprabhu was out hunting, the goat escaped and came to the Dom's house. The Dom was away somewhere and the wife was sleeping and there was her thing open.

The goat mounted her but as it did so the Dom came in. Filled with anger he cut off two of the goat's testes. He wanted to kill it but it ran away and the Dom chased it with its testes in his hand. But it escaped and only its droppings remained. These turned into *jamun* plums. The Dom dropped the testes and they turned into mangoes. The Dom went home. The *jamun* plums still look like the droppings of a goat.

Pterocarpus marsupium, Roxb.

83

BHATTRA

Chetliguda, Koraput District

In the waters of the Deodhara River lived the god Jalkamni. He had a daughter called Bijli Kaniya, whom he kept in a fish-basket. When the girl grew up, Jam Deo came to marry her. Her mother was ready to give her but the girl did not like him. But the mother insisted, so what was the poor girl to do?

Jam Deo, having arranged the betrothal, went home and called all the gods to celebrate the marriage. Other gods came and when the marriage was over, Jam Deo stayed a while with Jalkamni and then went home. As the party went, night fell and they stayed on Orongel[1] Hill. They slept there and Jam Deo brought the girl out of the fish-basket. As he brought her out, she slipped from his hand into the sky. Jam Deo tried to catch her but she slipped into the crack of a *bija* tree. At the very moment that she went in she began her period. When Jam Deo found he could not get her back, he went home. But Bijli Kaniya left the *bija* tree and went to live in the *tinsa*. That is why the sap of this tree, as well as the sap of the *bija*, is red.[2]

[1] Warangal, traditional home of the Bhattras.

[2] This sap, to which frequent allusion is made, is a blood-red astringent gum-resin which furnishes the 'kino' used in medicine. See also ch. XVIII, 113.

84

BHUNJIA

Patarpunji (Khariar), Sambalpur District

The Raja of Kankalpur was Bichhalwar Kuar. Bhimsen fought him till he wearied but he could not subdue him. When Bhimsen's son Nandwa heard of this he thought in his mind, 'It is because Bichhalwar Kuar is so slippery (*bichhal*) that my father cannot conquer him.' So he got some ash and threw it over Bichhalwar Kuar. Some of the ash stuck to Bichhalwar and some fell on the *sāja* and *tinsa* trees and cracked and whitened the bark.

Once Bichhalwar was rough with ash Bhimsen was able to get hold of him. He beat him so hard that blood poured from his body, but from every drop a new Bichhalwar was born. Bhimsen went on striking them down one after the other until at last he succeeded in killing Bichhalwar Kuar and there was no more life in his blood.

Bhimsen put all the blood he could collect into the *tinsa* tree. Even then there was a little over and this he put into the *bija* tree. That is why the sap of these trees is like blood.

85

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

When Rani-aru was a young mature girl, she menstruated for the first time. She was very ashamed and hid in the jungle under a *bija* tree. She wiped off the blood on the trunk of the tree. When the flow dried she came home. She went afterwards to the tree and struck it with her axe and blood came from it.

86

KOYA

Chirpalli, Koraput District

Twelve Koya brothers cultivated their fields jointly. One day the brothers quarrelled over the division of the harvest and came to blows. They separated and divided the property.

After some time, the eldest son brought a girl from another village in marriage. His parents abused him, saying, 'You've stolen a girl; now her parents will demand a lot of money from us.' The boy was angry and went with the girl to the forest, where he made a little hut. He used to go daily to his parents' house to steal grain and cattle.

In this way he managed to make a clearing and cultivate it. His parents tried to find him, but could not. The boy got rich with much cattle. He thought, 'What shall I do with all these cows? We'll kill and eat them one by one.'

So every month he killed two cows, ate some of the meat and dried the rest. He put a pillar in front of the house and tied up the strips of meat to dry. Now Deur was always going to and fro on this road and seeing this dried meat one day when the two were in the field was angry that they were killing all their cows. He turned the pillar[1] into a *bija* tree and the bits of meat into fruit. The fruit was very bitter. That evening, when husband and wife returned after dark, they picked one of the fruits thinking it meat, roasted it, cut it in two and ate it. It was very bitter and they threw it away. After this they decided to dry their meat indoors.

87

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

Burdu Saora of Tiddasi village had a daughter. When she grew up, her mother died and the girl looked after her father. Many people came to marry her, but she was not ready. Manglu Dol-Behera had a son who made love with the girl. In time she conceived. When her belly showed itself, her father saw it and abused her and the villagers laughed.

One day when the girl went to the clearing for work, her pains began and the child fell to the ground. The girl buried it on the spot and went home. In that place, from the child's

[1] Most of the tribesmen honour the *bija* tree and only cut it when the want a centre pole for a new house.

left side came a *tinsa* tree and from the right a *bija* tree. This is why if these trees are cut, they bleed like men.

Shorea robusta, Gaertn.

88

KUTTIA KOND

Girimel, Ganjam District

On the day that Nirantali was born, there sprang from below a small *harang* shoot and Nirantali put it on a stone. In those days there was no soil and Nirantali was afraid the plant would die. She brought some dirt out of her hair and put it on the stone and put the *harang* shoot in it. She watered it daily and the tree grew well. When the earth was made and men, the tree had flowers and fruit.

When Nirantali saw the fruit she thought, 'Let me keep this tree with me: but let its seed spread through the world. I'll call Bura Pinnu.' She called him and said, 'I have some very important work for you.' Bura Pinnu said, 'I'll give you rule over the whole earth.' So Nirantali said, 'Take the fruit of this *harang* tree and sow it all over the world.' Bura Pinnu made himself large and terrible and sounding *gonh-gonh-gonh* picked all the fruit and wandered over the world sowing the seeds.

Then Nirantali showed the first tree to Paramugatti and said, 'With this tree make ploughs. This is the strongest and best of wood for cots, doors and houses.' Paramugatti too began to love the tree and when a pillar was to be made for Darni Pinnu he made it of its wood. When he erected it, he offered it a pig and fowl saying, 'Remain for many years.' After this he sacrificed to Bura Pinnu. The Konds believe the *harang* to be the greatest of trees.[1]

[1] An opinion shared by writers on Indian silviculture. This story emphasizes what is a fact, the very wide distribution of the *sal* tree, its value for every sort of furniture, and its durability.

The Tamarind

89

BHATTRA

Deodhara, Koraput District

The tamarind was the last tree to be made. In those days human beings had horns—women had one, men had two.

One year there was a great famine and the people suffered so much that many left their homes, seeking sustenance elsewhere. In the eastern country was a Ghasia and Ghasnin who went from village to village begging. They came one day to Baniaput and stayed in the Naik's house. They stayed there for a long time and one of the Bhattra villagers flirted with the Ghasnin. The Ghasia saw it and in his anger beat her so hard that he broke off her horn. He picked it up and buried it in a dung-pit. From this grew a tamarind tree.

The woman went round saying in her language '*Tutli tutli*'. For so long as the wound hurt her, she went to the tree and wept. People heard her crying and thought the name of the tree must be *tutli*. When the woman recovered, she said, 'As my horn was bent, so let this tree's fruit be bent and let no one be happy over his food without it.' As they said *tutli*, the word became *tentuli* in Oriya.[1]

90

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu planted a tamarind tree and looked after it with the greatest care. When it grew it bore a long finger-like fruit. Mahaprabhu licked it to see what it was like, and when he had broken it open and eaten it he decided that it was good. He

[1] *Tamarindus indica*, Linn. A large, evergreen, tree; the leaves, to which such frequent reference is made both here and in MMI, pp. 142 ff., are pinnate, each with ten to twenty pairs of small half-inch leaflets attached. The pods, which also appear in the stories, are brown, three to six inches long, with a brittle epicarp, filled with an acid pulp, and are used in making condiments.

thought, 'Shall I give this to men and birds, or shall I keep it for myself?' At last he decided to share the fruit with men for, he thought, if there was a shortage of vegetables they could prepare the tamarind as a chutney to eat with their gruel. 'But I won't tell the birds about it, or there won't be enough for human beings.'

Just then three birds came by and asked Mahaprabhu, 'What fruit is this? Let us have some of it to eat.' Mahaprabhu said, 'It's no good; I've tried it, but it's very bitter. Even when I licked it I felt giddy, and if you eat it, you may die. It simply is not fit to eat; you had better warn all the members of the bird tribe about it.'

When the birds had gone, Mahaprabhu called Singi the Sun and Arke the Moon and gave them some of the fruit to eat and they found it very tasty. When they had finished they stood under the tree, but the heat of Singi the Sun was so great that it damaged the fruit and turned it slightly sour.

Then Mahaprabhu, Singi and Arke called Lachmi Bodnaik and said, 'Guard this tree and use the fruit for food. Take the seed and plant it on your hills. It will be greatly for your profit.'

91

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

Ita Didayi was the Chief of his village and very rich. He had a beautiful daughter whom many wanted to marry both for herself and for her father's money. But he refused everyone, for he wanted a boy to serve for her. Even for this he made a condition that the boy should sit on a great rock in the forest clearing above the house and pierce with his arrows every leaf in a tamarind tree that was growing in his garden. In those days the leaves of the tamarind were very large but the distance was great and not one of the boys succeeded. They all had to go away after being kicked five times by the girl.

Then one day an orphan boy came. In addition to shooting at the tree, the father-in-law ordered him to sow oilseed on the rock. The boy went up to the clearing and sat weeping on the rock. But Rumrok came to him and turned the rock into a field,

and helped the boy to sow the seed. But how was he to hit the leaves of the tree with his arrows? Rumrok told him to take his bow and arrows to a stream and wash them. Then he exchanged his own fire-arrow for the boy's and told him not to let anyone touch it or do anything with it, but put it on the roof of his house at night.

The boy did as he was told and presently the bow began to shoot of its own accord and pierced and tore to shreds every leaf in the tree and set it on fire.

That is why today the leaves of the tamarind are so small and the tree itself looks as if it had been burnt.

92

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

In the old days the tamarind tree had no fruit. At that time there lived a god on Maraka Hill and this god had a daughter, whose husband was a boy living in the house and serving for her.

One day husband and wife went to fish in the river Kulab, and caught a large number of prawns. The girl was very pleased; she filled her basket and hurried home, leaving her husband bathing in the stream.

On the way the girl passed under a tamarind tree, and as she did so the prawns flew up out of her basket into the tree. The girl had her basket, of course, on her head and did not notice what had happened until she arrived home. When she saw the empty basket she was frightened, for she thought her husband would think that she had eaten the prawns herself. She went back along the way weeping and met her husband standing under the tamarind tree. He asked her what was the matter and as he spoke one of the prawns fell down in front of him. They looked up and there were the prawns hanging from the branches of the tree. They tried to get them down, but it was no use. Then they lit a fire and the smoke blackened the prawns a little, but they did not fall. 'I'll get my axe and cut the tree down, said the boy, but just as he was going, his father-in-law, the god, appeared and said, 'Don't cut the tree. It will be worth

far more to you than a basket of prawns. Look, the prawns have turned into fruit which is hanging from the branches.'

And now when they looked they saw that the branches were covered with fruit.

93

KAMAR

Pataora (Khariar), Sambalpur District

Mahadeo fought against Basmasur and Basmasur fled for his life with Mahadeo in pursuit. On the way was a great tamarind tree. In those days the leaves of the tamarind were very large, and Basmasur climbed up the tree and hid among them. Mahadeo stood below and looked up, but could not see his enemy. He opened one eye and could not see him; he opened two eyes and could not see him; but when he opened his third eye so great was its power that the leaves of the tree became small and he saw him. He brought him down from the tree and killed him.

Since that day the leaves of the tamarind have been small as they are now.

94

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

There was a girl in the village where Ururaji and Pinnuraji lived. A boy from another village took her away. Ururaji and Pinnuraji went to get the bride-price. The boy gave them a cow, a goat and a pig and they took these things home. But on the way they made a hearth of three stones and killed the cow and ate it.

When they left they said, 'What shall we do with the stones?' Pinnuraji kicked them away and they turned into tamarind trees.

Pinnuraji said, 'This should only be eaten by the rich.' At that time Sat[1] lived among the Konds and they used tamarind leaves for plates and cups. But they did not like the taste and stopped using them, after which the leaves grew very small.

[1] Truth, or Virtue.

95

HILL SAORA

Busambo, Ganjam District

Kittung thought a great deal about how to make a tamarind tree, but he could not find the seed anywhere. As he came home one day he sweated in the heat and rubbed his body and some dirt came off. He made it into a little ball, pressed it out like a tamarind seed, held it in his hand and sat pondering for a long time. Then he thought, 'If only this would turn into a tamarind seed, how nice it would be.' He put the dirt in his mouth, and took it to his garden and planted it. In the rains, a tamarind tree sprang up. It gradually became very big and had great leaves. When the fruit came, it was very small. Everyone came to eat it, but people said, 'Here are big leaves and small fruits.' They cut the leaves with their knives and said, 'From today carry small leaves and big fruit, or we'll cut you down and throw you away. As the tree came from the dirt of Kittung's body, so let the fruit be shaped like a man's ribs.'

CHAPTER TEN

FOOD

1

BHATTRA

Chetliguda, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu made every kind of pulse but he forgot beans. In Sirtopur village were many Bhattras and their Chief was called Bitti. This Chief had three sons: the eldest was married, the other two were not. One day the three sons went to hunt. They got a barking-deer and brought it home. The people cooked and shared the meat. Next day the three brothers went to another village and stayed there five days. In their absence the eldest son's wife cut off the finger of her left hand as she was chopping up some of the meat that remained. She threw the finger into a stream. After she had eaten her food, she went to the place and found a bean-vine growing there. Its leaves had dark stains like blood. She tied it to a screen and it grew rapidly and covered it. This is how beans came into being.

2

BINJHWAR

Bangrapani, Sambalpur District

Once, long ago, a woman earned a boon from Mahadeo. He gave her the quality of living virtuously. And for some time she did indeed continue in her virtue, but then sin entered her mind and she began to walk in the path of evil. Her special evil was the sin of jealousy. She could not bear to see beautiful children, or young lovers, or husbands and wives living happily together.

At last Mahadeo came to her and said, 'I gave you the quality of living virtuously, but you have forgotten it and are walking in the path of sin. Therefore, in your next birth you will not have the body of a human being; you will be a chilli plant,

and you will always burn as now you burn with jealousy.'[1]

3

BINJHWAR

Pondipalli, Sambalpur District

The maiden Bamori lived in Tirpalli. She had no parents alive. When they died they left her under a thorn bush. She was very small and a childless Binjhwar adopted her. When the girl grew up, they called her Bamori.

The Binjhwar wanted to marry her to a Binjhwar boy. But she did not know how to do it and ran away frightened into the jungle. In Surhichhapar was a bamboo clump and she made her home there The Binjhwar sought for her, but could not find her anywhere.

In this girl's navel was every kind of grain-seed. In her day there was no grain; men lived on air and water.

One day a lame Kulta youth came to Surhichhapar and the girl asked him where he had come from. He said, 'I'm all alone; I have no parents and nothing to eat.' So the girl picked up some earth with her left foot and threw it over him seven times and his crooked leg became straight.

The boy and girl began to live together. The girl said after a time, 'I'll give you seed. You make a field ready.' He prepared a field and the girl cut her navel open with a golden knife and took out the seed. Then she married the boy.

Presently people came to buy their seed and so grain spread throughout the world.

4

BONDO

Andrahal, Koraput District

A man and his wife were cutting their clearing on the hillside. There was a small spring and, one day, when the woman went

[1] Cf. the Gadaba story, ch. X, 9.

there to drink, one of her necklaces broke and fell into the water. She collected most of the beads but a few were lost and after a time a tiny shoot of rice grew out of one of them. It grew and when it was ripe a fragrant smell came from it.

Now the woman was pregnant and when she went for water to the spring and smelt the sweet paddy she craved to eat it. She called her husband and said, 'Give me that sweet-smelling thing to eat or I will die.' The man was distressed by this for he could not see how the woman would be able to eat the ear of rice, and he went to find her something else that smelled as sweet. He could not find anything and at last disheartened he sat down on a rock and wept.

Singraj came by and asked, 'Why are you crying?' 'My wife's belly is swollen and she craves for this sweet-smelling thing and I don't know what to do.' Singraj said, 'Don't worry. This thing is rice and will be for your profit. Pick the ear and give your wife some to eat, but keep a little for seed.' Then Singraj showed the man how to make a field and to sow rice.

5

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

In the old days, when the Didayis were first living in Godaberi, there were no gourds and no grain. Then Rumrok created grain but there was nothing to cook it in except hollow bamboos. But gradually as men increased the number of their fields they found that bamboos were not sufficient and they went to Rumrok to ask for something else. He told them to go away and to return after a year.

Meanwhile he broke off one of his front teeth and sowed it on the side of a hill and it grew into a gourd vine. When the gourds were ready he gave them to men and they used them for cooking their food.

6

DIDAYI

Sindiguda, Koraput District

In the old days when there were very few people in the world, there were no pumpkins. Now in a certain village there was a Didayi who had five daughters, four of whom were married. The eldest, however, could not find a husband because her breasts were very long, two cubits long. Her father was ashamed that his younger daughters were married but his eldest was without a husband and he went everywhere to try to arrange something for her. He even offered to give her without taking any bride-price. But whenever people saw her long breasts they went away afraid.

Finally the father decided to cut off his daughter's breasts in the hope that she would then be more attractive to men. He took her to his forest-clearing and there he cut off her breasts and threw them away. He put some medicine on the wounds and they were quickly healed. Now every youth in the village was anxious to marry the girl and she soon got a good husband.

Some time afterwards the girl's father went to his clearing and found that the breasts which he had thrown away had turned into pumpkins. This is why when you eat a pumpkin your thirst as well as your hunger is satisfied.

7

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

At the beginning food did not taste very nice. Men had nothing but salt to flavour it. Meat used to go bad and stink and the smell both of meat and vegetables made men so sick that in time they gave up eating anything but rice. Rumrok felt sorry about this and he planned to create something which would enable men to eat meat and vegetables with relish. He cut off the little finger of his left hand and threw it down into Komapoda. From the finger there grew twenty-one turmeric plants and before long these plants produced rhizomes.

When everything was ready Rumrok killed a deer and called Bisoi Didayi and showed him the turmeric plants. He then cooked the flesh of the deer himself and flavoured it with turmeric. The Didayi ate the meat and declared that he had never tasted anything better, and since then all mankind has used the plant.

8

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

After the Middle World had been created, the gods assembled for their council at Barnobhatha. One of them said, 'We have made the Middle World, but there is no grain for men to eat.' Many gods made suggestions, but none were any use; nobody could think of a way to provide men with grain.

Near Barnobhatha was a village. The Chief had a small son. One day as the child was playing in the street, a cow and bullock came running and trampled on him and killed him. The Chief, filled with anger, threw an axe at the cow and broke its horn. From the broken horn twelve kinds of grain in the form of human beings came out and started to dance.

The twelve kinds of grain danced away from the village towards the hills. The gods watched from Barnobhatha. 'Here is grain,' they thought, 'but it is dancing away. We must stop it.' Dharmo Deota and Mother Basmoti ran towards the dancers and stood before them with folded hands. 'Don't go away,' they cried. 'If you do, all men will die. Stay here in the Middle World with us.' They agreed, and Dharmo Deota blew on them and changed them back from men to grain.

9

GADABA

San Duralu, Koraput District

There was a short, ill-tempered girl, daughter of a Brahmin, whose name was Butani-butki. If anyone smiled at her, she scowled; if anyone joked with her, she cursed. When men came to marry her, she threw stones at them. She grew old unmarried

and childless, and in due time she died. The neighbours burnt her body, and when all was over they found that one small bit of wood was left. The shaman took it to his tobacco-patch and planted it, for such bits of wood are useful in keeping away those who would cast the evil-eye on growing things. Presently this bit of wood took root and sprouted; it grew up as a chilli plant, short and ill-tempered as the girl Butani-butki herself.

10

GOND

Gumma, Ganjam District

One day Mahaprabhu called a jackal. It came and touched his feet. Mahaprabhu said, 'Go down to the world and tell the human beings there that they are to bathe twice and eat once every day.' Mahaprabhu told the jackal this three times and made it repeat the message. Then the jackal set out to visit the earth.

It took eight days to reach the earth and on the last day it disturbed a number of partridges which flew up into the air with a great noise. The jackal was so frightened that it fell over and completely forgot what it was it had to say.

The jackal thought and thought but it could not remember a word of its message. Presently it came to a certain village. The headman greeted it, saying, 'Why have you come here?' 'Mahaprabhu has sent me,' said the jackal. 'What message has he for us?' asked the headman. 'He says', replied the jackal, 'that you should bathe once and eat three times every day.' The people were pleased at hearing this and when the jackal saw how welcome the message was, it went on to another village and there told the people that they were to bathe once and eat five times in a day.

This is why men do not often bathe, but eat whenever they get an opportunity.

11

GOND

Chacharaguda, Koraput District

When men were first born, they lived on berries, plums, mangoes and other fruit; they had no grain. But growing dissatisfied with this diet they went to Mahaprabhu and said, 'Give us some other food.' Mahaprabhu said, 'Be content with this for a time; presently I'll give you something else.' Mahaprabhu sought everywhere, but could find no rice-seed. There was a Raja who had a horse; the horse went daily to the jungle to graze; one day it ate a rice-plant. When it came back, it excreted and rice came from its excreta. A Ghasia saw it and picked it up.

One day Mahaprabhu came to the Ghasia in his search and the Ghasia asked what he wanted. 'Grain-seed,' he said. 'What do you want with that?' Mahaprabhu said, 'I'll have fields made and the seed sown in them and when there is plenty, all will eat.' The Ghasia said, 'I have some kind of seed, but what it is I do not know.' He showed it to Mahaprabhu who cried, 'Here is every kind of food.' The Ghasia gave ten seeds to Mahaprabhu and kept five for himself, so as to have some profit. Mahaprabhu took the seed, had a field made, and sowed it. From the ten seeds ten kinds of grain were born. That year Mahaprabhu stored it all, but next year he had more fields made and soon there was a great quantity of seed and he distributed it to men.

12

KAMAR

Jhallap (Khariar), Kalahandi District

Father Mahadeo was always getting drunk. As a result his body was gradually filled with poison. One day, when he was very drunk he wanted to void himself, so he staggered out into the garden and pissed all over a chilli plant that was growing there. Ever since the chilli has been full of fire.

13

KAMAR

Kurchul (Khariar), Kalahandi District

At the very beginning when the world was made men went to Bhagavan and begged him for food to eat. Bhagavan said, 'Go to the banks of the great lake. There lives Nirakar Swami. Ask him for what you need. I am busy with my own work.' Men went accordingly to Nirakar Swami and said to him, 'We have nothing to eat or drink; give us what we need.' The Swami said to his wife Nangin, 'Give these people something to eat and drink.' Nangin made some rice with her own hands and said to it, 'Go to men and fill their bellies.' Rice asked her, 'How am I fill their bellies?' She replied, 'They will husk you and cook you and eat you and then their bellies will be full of you.' Rice replied, 'I will not go alone, for they will finish me too quickly.' So Nangin made every kind of pulse and millet and sent them with Rice and men fed on the food and filled their bellies.

14

KAMAR

Pataora (Khariar), Kalahandi District

A Raja ruled in Manikgarh. Bhimsen was a serving-boy in his house. The Raja had three fields; their names were Sonebera, Rupabera and Motibera. One year when the rice-harvest was ripe, the Raja said to Bhimsen, 'Go and reap the crop.' Bhimsen reaped the three fields and tied up the grain in bundles and returned home. The Raja said, 'How is it that you have finished the work so quickly? How much was there?' Bhimsen said, 'There was not much, only two-and-a half handfuls. The Raja was disappointed and said, 'What can we do with so little? You might as well go and burn it.'

Bhimsen went to the field and when he set fire to the crop there was a great blaze. From his palace the Raja saw the great fire and when Bhimsen came home he asked, 'What is that great cloud of smoke?'

Bhimsen said, 'That is the rice. You told me to burn it and I did so.' The Raja replied, 'You told me that there was only two-and-a-half handfuls, but I didn't realize that to you a handful is a mountain. Go quickly, run, and put out the fire.'

Bhimsen ran to the field and put out the fire, but the heap of grain turned into a mountain; later it was called Manigarh. The fire turned the grains of rice into different colours, red and yellow and white, as they are today.

15

KOND

Goludokki, Koraput District

In the days when there was no grain, people had to live on roots, fruit and flowers. But when the population increased, Bura Pinnu brought every kind of seed and gave it to Semakupli and Gudabodo and said, 'Go to Oringbali Hill and cut your clearing and sow seeds of every kind. For rice make fields below the hills. Then you will have every kind of crop.' Next year Bura Pinnu called the other farmers and gave them every kind of seed, to the Paiks rice, to the Konds wild rice and millet. After this, people began to eat grain.

16

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

Bhima Raja and his Rani Juriamurti lived in Jampur. They had seven sons. At that time there was no seed of any kind. Bhima Raja and his sons made two fields; they called one Harsnimakiara and the other Rehnimakiara. When the fields were ready, they ploughed them. But Bhima Raja and Bhima Rani wondered what to do without seed. The Rani said, 'Kill your middle son and sprinkle his blood over the field.' Next day the Raja and six of his sons went to the field, leaving the middle son at home. The Rani said to him, 'Take fire to your brothers.' The boy went with the fire to the field and there his father killed him and sprinkled his blood over the soil. From the boy's blood every kind of grain sprang up.

Bhima Raja called a Kond and his wife and gave them the seed and through them its use spread throughout the world.

17

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

Nirantali lived in Bariganna, and fed mankind. But when men increased in number, she could not feed them all from her breast. So she called them to her and said, 'Go and cultivate: I can feed you no more.' To Paramugatti and Mangragatti she said, 'Go and cut clearings on Gummagada, Sarchagada, Sotiduki and Pritiduki Hills.' She said to the Paik, 'Go to Kandanela and Barinela and make fields.' So the Konds went with their axes and the Paiks with their ploughs and each began to cultivate. When all was ready they came to Nirantali and said, 'We've made the lands ready, but there's no grain to sow.'

At that moment from the ground emerged an elephant and a horse and some hair fell from their tails. Nirantali picked it up and from the elephant's tail she produced pulse and millet and from the horse's tail the small millets and maize. Nirantali scratched her head and a louse fell to the ground; as she picked it up it turned into a grain of rice. She gave the rice to the Paiks and the rest to the Konds.

18

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

Pulses are male and grains are female. Long ago when the various kinds of grain first saw men they ran away in fear. But the beans and pulses ran after them saying, 'If we have to die, let us die together in one place.'

This is why we cook pulses and grain together in one pot.

19

PARENGA

Rajubidai, Koraput District

When the Middle World was made, the great gods gathered together for a feast. Mother Basmoti ate so much that she was sick. Seven girls and five boys were born from her vomit.

The girls were called Dhanodai, Mandiadai, Kangudai, Kosladai, Sitridai, Jonadai, Jondridai, and the boys were called Kandulmanda, Jungomanda, Mungomanda, Birimanda and Kultomanda.[1] The gods knowing that the girls would give every kind of rice and millet, and the boys every kind of pulse to men, were very pleased. They said, 'Don't stay with us; there will be no profit in that. Go to the Middle World, where men are, and dance before them.' The seven sisters and five brothers accordingly went to the Middle World and danced from village to village.

There was a Dom Raja who lived in Domgarh. One day he went out hunting. On the way he saw the dancers and was charmed by them. He decided to take all seven girls as his wives. He ordered his servants to arrest them and take them to his palace. The Raja threw the brothers into jail, and hid the girls in a pit near the palace. He kept them like this for many days.

Presently Dharmo Mahaprabhu and Pat Deota Mahaprabhu thought, 'Men must be very happy now that the seven sisters and five brothers are with them, and they must be getting plenty to eat. Let us go and see how they are.' They went to the Middle World, but when they asked people how they were, they were told that everything was as it had always been, nothing but grasses and leaves and a little meat to eat. So the two gods got onto a horse and rode to Domgarh and there fought against the Dom Raja's servants and killed them and cut off the Raja's head. They freed the imprisoned boys and girls and gave them to men, and after that there was plenty of grain and pulse in the world.

Domgarh was near this village, and still there is a stone head of the Raja and the pit where the girls were imprisoned. We sacrifice every year to the stone in order to get good rain.

[1] The girls' names are of different kinds of rice and millet; the boys' names are of different kinds of pulse.

20

SAORA

Nawagaon, Ganjam District

In Jampador lived many Saoras. Mongra Saora, the headman, had a daughter. He did not wish to send her away in marriage for he wanted a boy to serve for her in his house. There were no chillies in those days. One day when the girl was in her menses, she went to the garden for brinjals and, as she was picking them, her nose-ring fell to the ground and she could not find it. After searching for a long time, she went home.

As no serving-boy came for her, her father married her to a youth and she went to her father-in-law's house. After she had gone a chilli plant sprang up from the lost nose-ring and grew among the brinjals. Mahaprabhu gave the girl a dream that a chilli plant had grown in her old home. She returned home and found the chillies. She told her parents and they ate them with their food.

21

HILL SAORA

Pekat, Ganjam District

One day a man went on a visit to the house of his wife's father. His mother-in-law cooked him some *tampa*[1] for supper. He had never had it before and was delighted with it. He stayed for several days and would not eat anything else. As he was going away he said, 'What is the name of that delicious stuff you've been giving me?' His mother-in-law laughed and said, 'Why, it is *tampa*.' And she gave him some tied up in leaves for his journey.

As he went along towards his home, the man kept on saying, '*Tampa, tampa, tampa*'. But presently he sat down to light his pipe and forgot the word and had to go all the way back to ask what it was. He started out once more, saying as he went along, '*Tampa, tampa, tampa*'. But then he came to a river where there

[1] *Tampa* is a special kind of *kedgeree*, a mixture of rice and pulse cooked together.

was a lot of sand and while crossing he forgot the word again. He decided that the word must have fallen out of his mouth into the sand and had been lost there, and he began digging frantically to recover it.

As he was digging some oilmen came by with oil to sell. 'What are you searching for?' they said. 'Something very valuable,' was the reply. They said, 'Well, we'll help you, but if we find it you must give us half.' This he promised to do and the oilmen put their oil down and began to dig. But as they were digging, the oil too got lost in the sand. 'Look,' they said, 'the sand is all *tampa*.' Directly the man heard the word he ran off shouting '*Tampa, tampa, tampa*' in triumph.

When he reached home, the stupid fellow found he had again forgotten the name of the dish he liked so much, so he just said to his wife, 'Feed me with whatever your mother gave me.' His wife said, 'But what was it?' 'O, I can't remember the name of it, but it was very good and I want some of it at once.' The poor woman did not know what to do and her husband got a stick and beat her. The quarrel lasted for days, until at last the woman slipped out of the house and went to ask her mother what it was she had given her husband. 'It was *tampa*,' said her mother. The wife went home and made an enormous quantity of *tampa* and said to her husband, 'Here is what you've been making all this fuss about. Now you've got to eat every morsel or I'll beat you with my broomstick.'

The husband sat down and ate and ate and ate, but he could not finish it all, and when his wife reached for her broomstick he ran out of the house and down to the river where he buried himself in the sand, digging deeply so that nothing but his head remained sticking out. By and by some thieves came along. They had stolen a few coconuts and sat down in the sand to divide them. After taking two each they found there was one over so they said, 'Let's break it and eat it between us.' They looked round and seeing the head of the buried man one of them prepared to break the coconut on it, supposing it to be a stone. But as the thief raised the coconut in his hand, the man shouted loudly and the thieves ran away in fright, dropping the coconuts as they went.

The man struggled out of the sand and collected the coconuts. When he got home he gave them to his wife, saying, 'These are for you, but give me *tampa*, only not so much this time.' After that the couple lived happily together.

22

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

In Sarondong village lived a Saora named Gabili. There was a childless Dom in that village; he had no children but he had two score sows. This Dom loved his pigs. He kept two boars for the sows. In those days the boar's organ was a full cubit long and the head of it was as big as a pot.

One day the Dom went to trade somewhere and after ten or fifteen days he came home. In his absence his wife did love with the boar and when the Dom returned he found the two together in the house and the boar mounted on his wife. The Dom broke in and full of fury beat his wife and cut off the boar's organ and threw it into the garden. The woman was very sad at the loss of her lover.

After six months the rains came and from the organ there grew up a vine. In due course the vine bore fruit and when the woman saw the gourd she was pleased, for there was the knob and a long handle. She cut it, made a hole, put water and ash in it and put it aside for five days. Then she cleaned it and drew water for her husband and he drank. 'Where did you get this?' She told him and said, 'Today it has gone into your mouth.' She burst out laughing.

But her husband was not pleased.

23

HILL SAORA

Sindranjung, Koraput District

Long ago Jemra Kittung had a wife called Sidi-Biradi. He used to go to his field to plough and his wife would cook his midday meal in the house and then take it to him. One day,

after Kittung had gone to his field, Sidi-Biradi discovered that there was no rice in the house and she was at her wit's end to know how to make the gruel for her husband's meal. At last she found some small millet, put it to dry in the sun, husked it and made the gruel. But this took a long while and it was late afternoon when she started for the field.

In the meantime Kittung, tired and hungry, left his plough and sat down watching the path along which his wife would come. When she did come he abused her and although she explained what had happened, he remained sulky. In his temper he threw the pot of gruel at an ant-hill and broke it. He picked up the gourd (which was used as a ladle) and hit his wife in the back with the stalk. Then he stuck the gourd in the broken ant-hill with the bowl upwards.

After this husband and wife went home. That evening in the place where Kittung had struck his wife she found a boil full of pus. The following morning, when she went to the field, she found that the gruel which had been spilt on the ground had turned into mushrooms of one kind and the gourd had turned into mushrooms of another kind. Sidi-Biradi exclaimed, 'May whoever eats you get a boil like mine!'

Sometimes people do get boils of this kind after eating mushrooms, but they are so tasty that everyone continues to take them.

24

HILL SAORA

Busambo, Ganjam District

One day Kittung was ill with fever and jaundice; he turned yellow all over and his urine was dark. He went out of the house and vomited a lump of bile. He covered it with earth and went back to the house. Soon a turmeric plant sprang up from the lump of bile. In three days it grew large and bore flowers. When Kittung saw this he picked one of the flowers and ate it. At once the fever left him and his yellow colour departed. He thought, 'If the flowers are such good medicine, what about the root?' He dug it up and broke it into bits which he then planted out: they soon grew and he had a whole garden of turmeric. After

that Kittung ate a little every day. But he got tired of eating it raw; when he cooked it with his food he found it much improved. Kittung discovered that it kept disease away and when it was rubbed on the body it stopped the itch.

25

HILL SAORA

Dariambo, Ganjam District

One day the Saoras who were living on the slopes of the Mahendragiri Mountain offered sacrifice to Tangorbasum[1] on the path that led out of their village to the east. They finished their offerings, feasted and went their way. But they forgot the leg of a fowl. It lay there as it was for a time and then when the rains fell it sank into the earth. Presently a turmeric plant sprang up from it. Tangorbasum came in a dream to the priest of that place and told him to bring the root home and plant it in his garden, for it would be useful to him in many ways.

26

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

The first thing that Kittung made for men to eat was pulse. But they had nothing else to go with it.

One day Kittung gave his daughter Soiti some golden ear-rings, but as a result of wearing them she fell ill and died. The women of the family carried her body to the pyre and burnt it with the rings still in her ears, for they were afraid to touch them.

In due course they performed the Guar ceremony and then the rains came. From the pit where the girl's ashes had been buried,[2] mushrooms grew up from the ear-rings. Presently the girl came in a dream to her mother and told her about this and that even though the mushrooms had grown from the ear-rings they were good to eat.

[1] The Saora god of pathways: the fowl's leg was left on the path.

[2] After cremating a body, the Saoras bury the ashes in a pit and make a small emblem of a house above it.

27

HILL SAORA

Regaisingi, Ganjam District

At first every tree bore fruit, but there were no roots in the ground. Men's noses and their umbilical stumps were very long; when they walked about they had to hang their noses over their shoulders. Kittung gave someone medicine to make his nose smaller, but it was no use.

One day Kittung called men and made them very drunk on palm wine and *abba* spirit. They lay down to sleep and Kittung with a gold knife cut their noses and stumps and rubbed some wood-ash on the wounds. He took the stumps and buried them in his garden and the noses in the jungle. After six months the stumps turned into sweet potatoes and the noses into *murgudi* roots. Kittung told men to eat them and they have done so ever since.

28

HILL SAORA

Baijalo, Ganjam District

In the old days there was no grain in the world, and men were few. What men there were lived on roots. Gradually more and more people were born until there were not enough roots to go round. Men got together and went to Kittung.

But Tumgul Saora and his wife, who lived in Tumgulpur, did not go, for they had grain hidden in their house. Kittung said to himself, 'All men have come except Tumgul' and he told the others, 'Go now and manage somehow or other for this year. Next year I'll give you plenty to eat.' Kittung sent his messengers to find grain. They searched everywhere without success until they came to Tumgul's house, where they found the wife husking on the veranda. When they saw her, they quietly went away.

Kittung sent two of his officers to arrest Tumgul. He said to him, 'Give me the grain so that I can increase it for the sake of all men and for your sake also; for if you eat it, it will soon be

done.' After a lot of fuss, Tumgul gave him seven handfuls. Kittung had a field made and sowed the grain. When it was ready he reaped, threshed, winnowed it and stored it in his house. Then he called the whole world and distributed it.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

TOBACCO

1

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

On Samudra Hill, Mahaprabhu sowed tobacco seeds and showed Soma Bodnaik where they were, saying, 'Throw cow-dung and goat-dung into your garden and weed all the grasses in it.' Soma Bodnaik did so and then went to Mahaprabhu and said, 'My garden is now ready.'

Mahaprabhu gave him a tobacco plant and said, 'Plant this in your garden; when it flowers, cut the first flower and let the later flowers grow big and turn into fruit. Then store the seeds. Pick the leaves, dry them and when they are dry come to me.' Soma did all this and when everything was ready he went to call Mahaprabhu. Mahaprabhu brought the leaves of a great creeper and made a pipe and filled it with tobacco. He made Soma Bodnaik smoke it and said, 'Smoke this; it is tobacco. When visitors come, entertain them with it and they will admire you and become your friends.'

2

BONDO

Dumiripada, Koraput District

There was once a mighty snake. It had a most beautiful wife whose name was Diyamoti Kaniya. She was beautiful—and she was lustful. The snake, try as it might, could not satisfy her. Yet it was so big that it would boast, 'I can eat the whole world and all mankind.' When it was angry and shouted at its wife the earth trembled at the sound. This snake used to sleep for six months and wake for a day, then sleep again.

Mahaprabhu thought in his mind, 'This snake is too big; one day it will destroy the world.' One day when it was asleep Mahaprabhu came to its house to see what could be done about

killing it. When he saw Diyamoti he fell in love with her. She said, 'Come, lie with me.' But Mahaprabhu was afraid and said, 'No, not now, for if your husband wakes up he'll see us.' 'No, no, he sleeps for six months at a time; he'll never know anything about it.' Then Mahaprabhu said, 'What's the use of having you once? I want to be with you always.' Diyamoti said, 'Well, I'm ready. I don't want to live with this nasty snake.' Mahaprabhu said, 'Then we must first kill your husband, or he'll come after us. Let him wake up and then ask him where he keeps his *jiwo*.'[1]

Mahaprabhu went home and presently the snake woke up and asked its wife to pick bugs from its head. As she picked them out she stroked its face and said, 'Do tell me where your *jiwo* is.' The snake replied, 'Well, where is yours?' She said, 'In the pot, the spoon and the fan.' The snake picked them up and threw them out and the girl died. But it soon repented and said, 'Where will I ever find such a beautiful wife again?' It brought back the pot, the spoon and the fan into the house and Diyamoti revived. Then she said, 'What a lot of trouble you've given me! Now to make up for it, you must tell me where your *jiwo* is.' It said, 'In the ocean lives a crocodile; with the crocodile lives a parrot; in the parrot is my *jiwo*.' 'And how can I see it?' she asked. 'Take a pig with you. Throw the pig into the sea, the crocodile will come to eat it, and you can easily catch the parrot.' The snake went to the hill, got its food and went to sleep again.

When Mahaprabhu saw it was asleep, he came to see the wife and she told him where the *jiwo* was. Mahaprabhu bought a pig and took it to the ocean. He gave it to the crocodile and caught the parrot. As he took the bird in his hand the snake got fever. Mahaprabhu pulled off its wings and the snake writhed in pain. Mahaprabhu killed the bird and the snake died. Then Mahaprabhu went to see Diyamoti and the girl said, 'Now you must have me.' Mahaprabhu got ready for it, but when he saw her thing it was so enormous that he was afraid and said, 'If I do it you'll just swallow me.' He brought an elephant for her and said, 'Do it with this elephant.' The elephant took her but she said,

[1] Soul or life-index.

'There's no pleasure in this sort of thing; it is you I want.' But Mahaprabhu refused again and Diyamoti was very angry with him.

Mahaprabhu gave her a good beating and she died. He buried her and soon from her head came a beautiful plant. When men saw it they picked the leaves and cooked them as vegetables. When they ate them they felt intoxicated. At first they ate the leaves raw, later they learnt to smoke them. Many men enjoyed the leaves and now at last Diyamoti was satisfied, for soon the whole world was enjoying her.[1]

3

BONDO

Kirsanipada, Koraput District

Beyond the Machkund river is a mountain where long ago Mahalakshmi was born and with her every kind of tree, grass and animal. When the Bondos heard that Mahalakshmi was born they took her away into the Bondo country.

Now Mahalakshmi herself was every kind of grain and while she was with them the Bondos spent their whole time feasting and eating whatever they desired. But Mahalakshmi grew frightened, for she thought that she would be entirely destroyed, and one day she went back to her hill and prepared to run away to the country by the sea. But from under her feet the red love-charm was born and it spread out its great leaves and its sweet-smelling flowers. This was tobacco and it stood with folded hands before her and said, 'Don't go away but stay with us here. I will allow men to eat me first and only when they have been satisfied by me will they eat you.'

Before very long a crowd of Bondos came shouting in search of Mahalakshmi, but they found her looking poor and ugly beside the beautiful leaves and flowers of the tobacco plant. In their excitement at getting the new love-charm, they did not eat nearly so much grain as before and so Mahalakshmi was not destroyed.

[1] This motif occurs, though in a somewhat different form, in Gadaba, Juang, Kond, Muria and Gond stories. See MMI, pp. 323ff.

4

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

There were twelve Gadaba brothers living on the Surawali mountain. They were all married. They had no proper food to eat, but a she-goat fed them with its milk. One of the brothers used to take this goat to graze while the others went to collect fire-wood, leaves and roots.

In front of the brothers' house there was a great tree on which many birds used to nest. One night there came a cuckoo from the east carrying in its beak a tobacco seed. When it perched on the tree, it dropped the seed to the ground below.

One day the brother who used to see to the grazing had a headache and allowed the goat to roam about near the house. The goat found the tobacco plant that had grown up from the seed and ate some of the leaves. The intoxicating juice passed through its body into its milk and that evening when the brothers took it they became drunk with a new pleasure. After that the goat used to eat the tobacco leaves every day and got drunk with them and when the twelve brothers took its milk they got drunk too.

But one day they thought, 'Why should we not try to eat the leaves ourselves?' They did so and after that they would not allow the goat to have them.

5

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

From the day of his birth Father Mahadeo was a little mad. Once, soon after he married Mother Parvati, while she was still a young wife, just brought to the house, she was late in getting dinner, and Mahadeo began to say, 'Food! Food!' Parvati was young and thought that Mahadeo desired to take his pleasure with her. She looked at him and smiled. But he just went on saying, 'Food! Food!' In this way ten or five years passed.

Then Ganeshdeo was born. But Mahadeo did not change.

He took no notice of Parvati, but went on saying, 'Food! Food!' Soon Parvati was weary of him and of the child.

At last when she could bear it no longer, Parvati took the child to the jungle. She found a certain leaf and called on Bhagavan, begging him by the strength of her virtue to help her. She said to the leaf, 'If you are the true Banaspati Maharaj,[1] make my husband love me.' She rolled another leaf into a pipe, powdered up the first and filled the pipe. When she came home she laid the pipe by the hearth and set to cooking her dinner. When Mahadeo came in crying, 'Food! Food!' she put a bit of fire in the pipe and gave it to him.

Mahadeo began to smoke and was soon drunk with it; he forgot everything, forgot even to say, 'Food! Food!' Parvati cooked in her own time—there was no longer any hurry—and then gave Mahadeo his dinner.

After that so long as Mahadeo got his pipe he gave his wife no trouble. Parvati fetched the seeds of the plant from the jungle and sowed them in her garden, and gradually tobacco became known to mankind.

6

KOYA

Tondapalli, Koraput District

In Dhannaput there were two Koya brothers, Sonia and Sukra. Each had two wives. In due time all the wives had children. Sonia arranged the marriage of his elder son and soon after this his younger wife became pregnant. When it was time, the girl gave birth to a child. They cut the cord and buried it with the placenta in the house, and lit a fire above it. On the sixth day there grew from it a tobacco plant. Sonia was worried by this, not knowing what it was, and went to tell Deur. Deur said, 'I cannot tell you anything now: let the plant grow for a couple of months and then come to me again and tell me how you like the smell.' Two months later, when the leaves were big, Sonia found himself drunk on the smell and slept very soundly.

He went to Deur and said, 'This plant gives excellent sleep

[1] Lord of magic herbs.

but after smelling it one cannot do so much work.' Deur said, 'That doesn't matter. When it bears flowers and fruit, let the fruit ripen, then remove the tiny seeds and store them somewhere. Sow the seed in your garden and you will have many such shrubs.'

7

KOND

Amblibuwa, Koraput District

In the old days there was no tobacco and men had no means of getting intoxicated. This meant that they had no excuse for resting during their work, but had to go straight on till it was finished. Seeing this, Nirantali thought, 'Men have a great deal of trouble, working all day. I must make something for their recreation.' So from her little girl's hair she took a white bug and threw it into her garden. When the rains fell, the bug became a tobacco plant and when leaves grew on it, Nirantali picked them and made a cheroot and gave it to her husband. He smoked it and was pleased and after a few days called Semakupli and gave him a cheroot also. In this way Semakupli learnt to smoke and Nirantali gave him seeds and he planted them and taught the rest of the world to smoke.

8

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

When Nirantali first gave birth to children, she took some turmeric to a river and bathed there. She put the turmeric on the bank. As she bathed, the turmeric turned into a bamboo. Nirantali watered it daily till it grew big. There was no tobacco in those days. The Konds used to crush the leaves of the *moko* tree and chew them. One day Nirantali asked them what they were chewing and they told her. She said, 'This is no good.' She picked up some dust and ash and rubbed a little dirt off her body and threw it all on the ground and a tobacco plant sprang up. She said, 'From today chew this.' The Konds said,

'But how are we to preserve it? We have no cloth to tie it in.' Nirantali said, 'Go to the river; there is a bamboo; cut it and bring it to me.' They brought it and she made it into tubes and told them to keep their tobacco in them.[1] The Konds always rub their tobacco so that a little dirt from their bodies mixes with it: this improves the flavour.

9

KUTTIA KOND

Bandika, Ganjam District

Nirantali had some tobacco seeds in the bun of her hair. There were no clouds at first and Nirantali called a blacksmith to make clouds of iron. But when they were ready he found that they were too heavy to lift and he asked Nirantali to help him. She said, 'Let me have a bath and then I will come and help you.' She went to the river Bujiano to bathe. As she was washing her hair with mud the seeds that she had hidden dropped into the water and were washed up onto the bank. Soon many tobacco plants grew up.

When she had finished bathing Nirantali went to help the blacksmith to throw the clouds into the sky. When she had finished, she called Urantali and, taking her to the river, showed her where the tobacco plants were growing.

10

PARENGA

Patarput, Koraput District

A Dom merchant had a daughter who would have been very pretty but for the fact that she had no hands or feet and a diseased nose. When she grew up she desired a husband, but no one would have her. The Hindus would not marry her because she was a Dom, and the Doms would not marry her because she had no hands or feet and her nose was diseased.

[1] These tubes are illustrated in my *Tribal Art of Middle India*, pp. 66-7.

She went weeping to Mahaprabhu and said, 'You have sent me to this Middle World, but you have not sent a mate for me.' But he could do nothing to help and she went home. Then she refused to eat or drink, and soon flies began to settle on her body and her brothers took her behind the house and left her there. In this wretched state she died.

The family was frightened that her ghost would be troublesome since she had died in such misery, so they took her far away from the village and buried her.

Presently her body turned into a tobacco plant. One day a sadhu passed by. He had no *ganja* that day, and as he went along he picked all sorts of leaves and chewed them to quench his desire. Among the leaves he picked a tobacco leaf and at once he forgot his *ganja* and felt drunk with pleasure.

II

HILL SAORA

Kerubai, Koraput District

In the old days no one used to smoke cheroots. One day Ramma and Bimma, the two brothers, got some tobacco seeds and sowed them in their house. When the plants were ready he called a Dom and made him cut them and taught him how to make them into cheroots.

These brothers used to smoke. One day Ramma quarrelled with his brother and went to live separately; they no longer spoke to one other. Kittung tried to reconcile them, but they took no notice of him. Kittung went home and at night sent the Dom to Ramma's garden, telling him to pull up by the roots all the tobacco he found there. The Dom did as he was ordered and brought a bundle of plants. Now Ramma could not get anything to smoke and he was too proud to ask Bimma for anything from his garden. Kittung sent a present of cheroots to Bimma and said, 'Walk up and down smoking in front of Ramma's house.' Ramma saw him and got more and more agitated: at last he asked Bimma to give him some. Bimma lit a cheroot and gave it to Ramma. In this way they became friends again. Ever since the gift of tobacco has made men friendly to each other.

12

HILL SAORA

Tarebil, Koraput District

There were four Saora brothers living in the jungle with their wives. In those days men did not cough or sneeze and if they were hiding in the jungle no one could tell whether they were there or not. The women too could not hear their husbands coming home; there was no warning; sometimes they were caught naked and were ashamed. The women talked it over and went to Piskisum and begged him to make some arrangement whereby any stranger approaching a place would give some notice of his coming. The god picked a tobacco leaf and said, 'Take this, grind it up and when your husbands next come home throw it in front of them.' They did so and the men began to cough and sneeze. The eldest coughed so much that he died and they carried his body to the burning-ground.

CHAPTER TWELVE

WINE, BEER AND SPIRITS

Palm-Wine

1

BINJHWAR

Tumibandh, Sambalpur District

In Hirapali lived a Gond and his wife. They had no children. This Gond served Bara Deo who blessed him, saying, 'You will have five sons and three daughters.' According to his word children began to be born. When they grew up, the Gond arranged their marriages, for all of them but the youngest son. For him he got the daughter of the Gond Chief of Kisnapalli. Many others asked for her but the Gond refused. In this way enmity arose between the two families. The boy's mother was a witch and she performed magic against the mother of the boy who married the girl. After the wedding the boy fell ill and died. They buried him and put his marriage-crown by his head. From this crown a toddy palm sprang up. The parents saw it and called their Guru from Bairagarh. In their old Gondi he spoke, 'This is from the *talla* (head) and it will be called *tal*. Serve it and care for it. When it grows, it will give fruit and so spread through the world.'[1]

2

BISON-HORN MARIA

Tikanpal, Bastar District

Long ago there was a Maria called Iro Kowachi who had two

[1] I have studied the Bastar traditions of the sago palm in my article 'The Sago Palm in Bastar State', *J.R.A.S. Bom.*, Vol. XVIII (1942), and the Bondo attitude to all kinds of alcoholic refreshment in my *Bondo Highlander*, pp. 53 ff.and *passim*. I have included the Bastar legends here because they show many parallels to the Orissa stories.

Thurston (Vol. VII, p. 100) gives a Tiyan account of the origin of toddy-drinking, and Sawe (p. 164f.) a Warli story which ascribes the discovery of palm-wine to Isar Deo and Gauri. Risley (Vol. II, p. 275) gives a story of the origin of the Sunri (Sundi) caste, which suggested that the first liquor was made with rice.

beautiful daughters, Ilo and Palo. He made a seat of *irpu* wood and covered it with the skins of lice. He proclaimed that anyone who could lift it up and put it where he could bathe upon it, and who could say what kind of wood it was made of, and what skin covered it, would get his daughters. All the boys of the neighbourhood came to try but none could tell what the seat was and none could lift it up. At last a lame boy called Mad Moda came from the Irma Raj with an open sore upon his leg. He too was unable to guess what the seat was made of until a fly came and said, 'Let me sit on your sore and eat it and then I will tell you what the wood is.' The boy let the fly settle upon him and after it had taken its fill it told him that the seat was of *irpu* wood and was covered with the skins of lice. Then the boy was able to lift up the seat and put it where Iro Kowachi could bathe.

Now Mad Moda was lame and ugly and covered with hideous sores. When the two girls Ilo and Palo saw him, they ran away in terror but the boy went stumbling along after them and dropped his dancing-stick. He went on and at last caught the girls by the strings with which they tied their hair into a bun. He pulled the cloth off their shoulders and tore out some of their hair. Then he threw them down in the bed of the Indaltom River and enjoyed them. Afterwards the river divided and flowed onwards in two streams.

The boy's bell-stick turned into a toddy tree; the string from the girls' hair became sago palms; the hair itself grew up as a date palm; the cloth became the broad-leaved plantain tree. Because on that day the girls' cloth fell from their shoulders, they now do not cover their breasts.

3

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu planted every kind of tree on Samudra Hill. When the trees grew and bore flowers and fruit, many birds and insects came to eat them. But the date palm never was able to raise itself above the ground.

One day Mahaprabhu came to see how the trees were, and found everything growing well except the date palm. 'What a pity this is,' he thought. 'Not even a fly comes to settle on it.' He took some red earth from his foot and waved it round his head and blew on it. It turned into a grub. Mahaprabhu put the grub into the tree and said, 'Live in this tree and feed on its root. Watered by your urine it will soon grow tall like the rest.'

4

BONDO

Tulaguram, Koraput District

When the earth was made, the first boy and girl became man and wife and in due time the girl conceived. In those days they had no house or village, but wandered from place to place. When the day came for the birth of the child, the two sat beneath a sago palm, and here the girl was delivered of twins. At that moment a deer came by and the husband ran to kill it. The deer led him a very long chase, but he caught it in the end. After he had killed it, he cut it up on the spot and sat down to eat the flesh.

The woman watched the road for him for a long time, and then she said to herself, 'He has surely killed the deer and is eating; he will bring nothing for me and I will go hungry.' So thinking she put her children down at the foot of the tree and went to find her husband. When she found him she too sat down to eat the fresh raw meat, and they both forgot about the children.

Under the sago palm the two children were weeping for hunger. The sago palm saw their distress and pitied them. The root of the palm went to the ocean and served it. When the ocean was pleased it said, 'What can I do? Tell me what you desire.' The sago palm root told it about the two hungry children, and the ocean poured water into the tree. The water climbed up the tree and began to drip down from above into the mouths of the two children. So drinking drinking they grew up. They married and from them were born twelve sons and twelve daughters. The twelve sons were the fathers of the twelve castes—Bondo,

Gadaba, Kond, Parenga, Didayi, Jhoria, Pengu—the rest we do not remember. The eldest of them was Nangli Bondo.

5

BONDO

Dumiripada, Koraput District

The seven brothers were out hunting. As they went along, they grew weary and sat down to rest under a sago palm. Presently some of the sap dripped on one of them. This brother had his pipe in his hand and he unrolled the leaf and caught a little of the sap. When he tasted it, he found it sweet and refreshing. He climbed up and cut the tree a little and more sap came and they all drank. But they found it troublesome to stand below the tree and catch the sap in leaves, and soon they learnt how to tie a pot up in the branches and collect it that way.

6

BONDO

Mundlipada, Koraput District

Formerly the sago palm was very small and had long roots. Mahaprabhu was wandering in the jungle and used to dig up these roots and eat them. One day when he was digging, a root broke and sap came out; Mahaprabhu drank it and liked the sweet taste. After that he used to stay near the sago palms and dig up their roots to get the sap.

Sita went to find her husband. When Mahaprabhu saw her coming he was afraid and ran away. Sita went to the trees and guessed that it was because of them that Mahaprabhu did not come to her. She felt very angry with them and kicked the roots right away into the sea. She tugged at the trees with both her hands and they stretched out and went up into the air, very tall.

When Mahaprabhu saw what was happening he came running back and caught hold of his wife. Sita cursed the trees, saying, 'From today your sap will come from your topmost branches and not from your roots.'

7

BONDO

Andrahal, Koraput District

One day when Rama was wandering in the forest, wearing bark-cloth and living on roots, he found a pot of liquid. He did not know what it was, but he was thirsty and drank it. After drinking it he went mad and refused to go near Sita. She was very angry and came to find him. When she discovered the reason for his madness, she kicked the pot of liquid into the air and it landed on the top of a tree. She cried, 'Whoever wishes to drink this will have to climb to the top of the tree to get it.' This was the beginning of the sago palm.

When we first tap the palm we make offerings to it. We do not let women drink on the first day, for Sita kicked the pot into the tree and gave us a lot of trouble. When the palm has its period it gives a great deal of sap.

8

GOND

Chitabera, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu made a fiddle for the Gonds and gave it to them to dance with, but the grown-up people were too shy to use it. So Mahaprabhu called the Gond boys and girls and told them to dance, but they too refused. Mahaprabhu told them to go home. Then he took Soma Manjhi with him to a certain hill where three sago palms were growing. On one there was a large spadix and Mahaprabhu told Soma Manjhi to climb up and cut it. He fetched a bamboo-pole and made a ladder and gave him a knife. Soma went up and cut the branch, then tied a little pot to the place, and climbed down again.

Mahaprabhu and Soma got four pots of juice that first day and took them home, two pots each. Mahaprabhu said to Soma, 'Tomorrow call the boys and girls.' And the next day, when the boys and girls had assembled, they gave them the wine to drink. They soon got drunk and were happy and sang and danced freely. Mahaprabhu said, 'This is grand stuff. No one is afraid once he

gets some of it.' He said to Soma, 'Use this at every sacrifice and at weddings and funerals and always give it to the gods.'

9

HILL MARIA

Itulnar, Bastar District

At the beginning of the world Tallur Muttai came with her old man Kadrengal to the forests of the Abujhmar. Tallur Muttai loved Kadrengal greatly, but he had no desire and never approached her. So Tallur Muttai created the sago palm with the hope that the juice would excite him.

When Kadrengal first went to tap the trees, he tied a thread from the cut peduncle down to a hole which he dug below; but the wind blew it to and fro and the juice was scattered. Then Tallur Muttai taught him how to tie a gourd to catch a great quantity; desire came to him; and he went to Tallur Muttai.[1]

10

HILL MARIA

Nalnar, Bastar District

The seven Kanyang, daughters of Bhagavan, came down to the Middle World to bathe. They combed their hair and wherever the broken hairs fell there sprang up sago palms.

11

JHORIA

Chikanput, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu had a sister. She was young and unmarried.

[1] In Ho tradition, the first man and woman, 'from their extreme simplicity', never came together until Sing Bonga the Creator 'taught them the art of making rice-beer, the use of which caused them those sensations which were in due time the means of peopling the world'. The Kols have the same belief. The Santals say (or used to say) that it was Lita, a traditional hero whose bow is the rainbow, who taught the first man and woman to make rice-beer and thus introduced sexual congress to the world.—Tickell, p. 797; Dalton, p. 185; Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. III, p. 508; *Census of India*, 1931, Vol. I, Part i, iiiB, p 109; Mukherjea, p. 9.

A Brahmin used to come daily to beg at Mahaprabhu's house. He fell in love with the girl and went to her. In due time she conceived. Fortunately, Mahaprabhu was away: he had gone to Megh Raja. In his absence the young mother gave birth to twins. The girl thought, 'If my brother sees these children, he'll kill me.' She decided to bury them. But Mahaprabhu came home before she could. The girl saw him coming and in her fright went into the earth, leaving the children above. Mahaprabhu heard them crying and understood that they were his sister's children. 'If I look at them it will be a sin,' he said and went away.

The children were left alone, but from the placenta grew a sago palm and its juice dripped into their mouths and kept them alive.

12

JUANG

Kantara (Pal Lahara), Dhenkanal District

When Rusi was born he said to Mahaprabhu, 'Now I am born, but what is there for me to eat?' Mahaprabhu gave him the mango tree, a date and a toddy palm and a *kumbi* tree to live with him and provide him with what he needed. When Rusi got very hungry he first went to the *kumbi* tree and found nothing. Then he went to the mango tree and ate the fruit, but it was sour and he could not fill his belly with it. He just nibbled at it and threw it away. Formerly the mango had no stones but after Rusi threw it away, it grew a stone as big as the part he wasted. Then when Rusi got very thirsty he went to the date and toddy palms and found the sap falling to the ground. He cut a bamboo and tied bits of it to the tree. When they were full of sap he drank it and felt very happy.

13

JUANG

Baragarh, Keonjhar District

In the old days men had nothing to drink. Malayawan Burha

and Malyawan Burhi had a grandson whose name was Cheriatoka. The Seven Sisters planned with Cheriatoka to dance without food for seven days. But during the dance the boy felt very hungry; he went away secretly for food and returned without saying anything. At the end of the seven days, the girls said, 'Let us go to the river to wash and clean our mouths.' But as Cheriatoka was washing, rice came out of his mouth. Then the sisters knew he had taken food secretly. 'If we touch him, we will all be defiled.' The boy tried to catch them, but they ran away. As they ran, the ornaments fell from their ears, and the date palm was born. The armlets fell from their arms and the sago palm was born. The bunches of cowries fell from their hair and the mahua tree was born. Hair fell from their heads and the toddy palm was born.

So wherever we take the sap from any palm we do it in the name of the Seven Sisters, and we offer the first drink to women—for then good sap will come from the tree.

14

JUANG

Balipal, Keonjhar District

Malyawan Burha went to the forest to make a plough. While he was making it he ate every kind of root for food, and for drink he had sago and toddy wine. He forgot his home and lived happily in the forest. Soon Malayawan Burhi got very angry and went to find her husband.[1] When she saw him eating and drinking, she put some sap from the *karanji* tree on the *pitaru* root he was eating and made it bitter; she pulled up the *bhainga* root and twisted it. That is why this root never breaks properly when we eat it.

The sago palm was once like the plantain. You could get its juice from the ground and eat its pith. But Malyawan Burhi threw some water from a bamboo onto it and it grew tough and straight and tall like a bamboo.

[1] For the common motif of a god or hero who goes to work in the forest, leaving an impatient wife behind, see MMI, p. 200.

Malyawan Burhi rubbed her breasts with the date palm and ever since its thorns have been like her ribs and its fruits like an old woman's breasts.

She was pulling up the toddy palm to throw it away, but Malyawan Burha caught hold of her and stopped her. So the tree remains, but pulled out and tall. When Malyawan Burha saw how tall the tree was, and could not think how to climb up for the sap, and when he found his roots were bitter, he gave up making a plough, and went home to his wife.

15

KOYA

Akarpalli, Koraput District

The maidens Ilo and Palo had cooked some rice and were straining out the water. Ura Marka came by. His long penis was tied round and round his waist. He hid behind the wall and unwound it. He knocked a hole through the wall, pushed it through and began to drink the rice-water. For in those days men ate and drank both with the mouth and with the penis. The girls heard the penis drinking and knocked it away from the pot. Ura Marka peeped in and saw them. They were very pretty and he desired them. But they were frightened of his long penis and ran away. As they ran, a few of their hairs fell down and became date palms; the girls themselves turned into sago palms; Ura Marka became a toddy palm even as he followed them. During the chase, his organ brushed against a *tinsa* tree and knocked off some of the bark. To this day the tree only has bark on the top: there is none at the bottom of the trunk.

In those days men had menstrual periods just as women do now. They used to tie hollow bamboo tubes to the penis to catch the blood. This was also the habit of Ura Marka. That is why a hollow bamboo is used to catch the sap of the toddy palm. Men's periods lasted for two or four months, and the toddy palm's period also is only for two or four months, after which the tree is pregnant and bears fruit.

16

KOND

Meriahpatta, Koraput District

A god's daughter was in her menstrual period. She was unmarried and had never had a child. But suddenly milk came from her breasts and fell to the ground. She said to the milk, 'Why have you fallen uselessly to the ground? Become a sago palm. A horn will grow from you and just as I first had my period and then milk came from my breasts, so you will first have your period and then clear milk will come from the horn and men will drink it.'

The palm grew up from the girl's milk and when men first cut it the juice was like blood and stank. After eight days it became clear and men caught it in a cup made of the milky leaves of the *kura* tree and gave it to a woman who was a mother and whose swelling breasts gave abundant milk.

Ever since, because the juice had first been drunk by such a tiger-breasted woman, the sago palm has given a plentiful supply of sap.

17

KOND

Nawaguda, Koraput District

At first the sap came from the foot of the sago palm, but fowls and pigs used to come and steal it. Then the sap climbed to the top of the tree.

18

KOND

Chutargaon, Koraput District

The date palm and the sago palm are brother and sister. They broke out of the earth and climbed up into the sky. Bura Pinnu's daughter was husking grain. The trees came up underneath her and lifted her up. 'Don't come here,' she said. 'Live down in the Middle World. People will drink your milk there, but

no one will take any notice of you here.' When they heard that, down went the trees and the girl fell with a thump onto the place where she had been husking grain. The trees went down so violently that the horn of the sago palm broke and its milk began to spurt out and fell to the ground.

Every day Daspajka used to go hunting with his dog. The dog saw the palm's milk on the ground, it licked it up and liking the taste licked more. Soon it was drunk. Somehow or other it got home. This happened every day. Milk fell from the broken horn; the dog licked it up and got very drunk. One day, Daspajka followed his dog to see what it was doing. He too licked up the milk and got drunk. But when he went the next day, he found no more milk was falling from the tree. That night he had a dream. 'First worship Mahaprabhu: then give some of the juice to a woman with big breasts full of milk: and you will always have enough.'

19

KUTTIA KOND

Girimel, Ganjam District

Nirantali took wax from a hive and made sago palm seeds. In Saphaganna she planted them near the village. A year later the trees grew up. Nirantali served the trees faithfully and when they were twenty years old they bore flowers. The village had grown very big then. Under one of the trees was the house of Arurengan and Londrenja. A large red squirrel climbed the tree and cut one of the flowers. Next day Arurengan was sitting under the tree and drops of juice fell on him; he caught them in his hand and licked them; he liked the taste and thought, 'If we cut the whole tree, we'll get a lot of juice.' So he climbed up the trunk and tied a small pot to a branch and within the day it was filled and two or four men drank it with pleasure.

20

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

Long ago the Konds had no idea how to get sap from the palm tree. One day Paramugatti and Mangragatti went hunting. They got very hungry and began to search for food in the jungle. They came to a palm, which in those days was very short, though even then it had a horn growing from it. They cut it and ate the pith and threw the bark into a stream, where it turned into a tortoise. Paramugatti and Mangragatti went away.

From the cut tree, juice flowed into a leaf. A crow drank it until it was tipsy. It flew to the village and rolled about crying '*Kaw-kaw*'. It fell down and staggered to and fro, while the children laughed. Paramugatti called it and asked what had happened. The crow said, 'You'll never believe the things I've eaten; come with me and I'll show you.' Paramugatti followed the crow to the palm and he too learnt to drink the juice.

Then daily Paramugatti and Mangragatti used to get drunk and quarrelled with everyone. When Nirantali saw this, she went to the tree and, seizing it by the top, pulled it until it grew tall and the juice was removed out of the way.

21

MURIA

Chikhli, Bastar District

Girls and boys from the house of Mahapurub came to the Middle World to dance from village to village. One day after bathing the girls forgot the cowrie ornaments of their hair. When they found they had lost them, they were angry and cursed the cowries, saying, 'Now turn into sago palms, and we will always live with you and will never lose you again.' For this reason it is said that the flower of the sago palm looks like a pendant bunch of cowries.

22

MURIA

Kapsi, Bastar District

When the seven Gorga Kaina (Maidens of the Sago Palm) were born, they only had one placenta between them. Their mother cut every cord and buried the placenta. While they were still babies the seven sisters ran away and the mother could not find them anywhere. She went to the placenta-pit and let the milk from her breasts fall upon it. As the days went by there grew up from the placenta a tree which was full of milk. This was the sago palm that was born of milk and always gives milk.

23

MURIA

Pharasgaon, Bastar District

Long ago there were eleven brothers and one day as they went hunting in the jungle they grew very thirsty. They came to a group of sago palms and rested in their shade. The youngest brother looked up at the tree and said, 'This is a very fine tree. Surely there is water hidden in its branches! I can see a pot tied there. Who can climb up and get it?' Each of the brothers tried to climb the tree and failed, for when they were nearly at the top they saw that the pot was full of blood. But the youngest boy made a rope of fibre and climbed up and when he looked in the pot the juice appeared to him as milk. He brought it down and they all drank of it. The ten elder brothers fell senseless but the youngest boy was intoxicated with pleasure. But he grew afraid thinking that his brothers would die. Then his god said to him, 'Offer a pig to the Gorga Kaina and they will recover.' He sacrificed a pig and his brothers sat up again.

24

HILL SAORA

Potta, Koraput District

At first the Saoras had no gods and of course no need of priests.

When the gods were born among the Saoras, Jungo and his wife Kaiti became the first shamans. They offered sacrifices but in those days they did not know how to get palm-wine, and the gods were not satisfied.

One day Kittung gave Jungo a dream and told him what to do. 'Give wine to every god.' Next day Kittung went to a palm and when his pot was full, he called the Kuranmar and gave him some to drink. Kittung said to the wife, 'You drink too;' she did and was pleased. After that, they always offered wine to the gods.

When the tree dries, the Saoras offer it rice and fish and the sap flows again.

25

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

There was a Kittung. His name was Pedamattung and his wife's name was Danoraiboi. He went to hunt in the jungle and got so engrossed in it that he forgot to go home, but stayed for many days sleeping in trees. At last his wife went after him. They slept together in the jungle and that night the woman conceived.

Some time afterwards Kittung again went to hunt. As the time for the birth of her child approached, the wife went to fetch wood. She put the bundle in the house, then took her pot and went for water. On her way back, girl and boy twins were born. She said to herself, 'I'll just take the water back to the house, and then I'll come for the children.' She left the children on the ground and hurried home with the water. In the meantime, two kites swooped down and carried off the children with the cord and placenta. Other kites saw them and fought saying, 'Give us our share.' In the struggle the babies fell down and were killed. The boy turned into a mango tree and the girl into a tamarind.

But one of the kites kept hold of the placenta. There was a great battle over it, and then at last it fell down and turned into the banyan tree.

The woman went back to get her children, but could not find

them anywhere. There was not a trace of them. She began to weep bitterly. Kittung came by and saw her thing swollen and blood coming from it. He said, 'What is the matter?' 'I have lost my children.' They looked everywhere but there was no sign of them and Kittung exclaimed, 'You have eaten your own children. You are a witch.' And he killed and buried her. From her grew up a sago palm, from which we get our milk.

26

HILL SAORA

Taragasingi, Koraput District

When men were born, grain was also born and men ate it, but after a time there was famine and there was nothing to live on but palm-wine.

One day Soma Saora went to get the sap from his palm and after drinking he fell asleep and dreamt. His father's ghost came and said, 'How long will you live on sap? Cut the tree down, remove the pith and dry it.' Soma felled four trees, took out the pith, dried it, pounded it, and made it into gruel. He liked the taste, and it kept him alive. When the famine was over, he and his neighbours continued to make the gruel, for it was good.

27

HILL SAORA

Gunduruba, Koraput District

In Sajang village were many Saoras; the Chief was Kumbap. After Kumbap's mother died, he called the neighbours and performed the Guar ceremony. There were no sago palms in those days. On the Guar day there was a great dance from morning till evening. The shaman was very drunk and danced too. As he danced, his trumpet hit his left eye and knocked it out and it fell to the ground. He picked it up and ran home with it in agony. As he ran to and fro in pain, he dropped the eye and it was lost in the soil. After a time a sago palm grew from the eye and soon after it was mature the shaman died. Afterwards Kittung came to Kumbap's eldest son in a dream and

said, 'The tree in your garden was born from your father's eye. When it is ready you will get wine to drink, such as he himself would have enjoyed.' This is why the fruit of this palm looks like an eye.

28

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

One day, when the number of people in the world was greatly increasing, Kittung and his wife went to a mountain and made a hut apart from the crowd. One night, Kittung was sitting by the fire in front of his hut and roasting a cob of maize. He began to eat the grains and by mistake put a live coal in his mouth. It burnt him and he spat it out. It was now black and Kittung thought, 'This thing has hurt me very much. It's no good just throwing it away. I'll make it into something.' He dug a hole in the ground in front of his house and poured some millet gruel into it. He dropped the bit of coal into the hole and covered it with earth. Daily he watered the place and in seven days a tree grew up. He carefully looked after it and it grew tall and in two years bore a spadix.

Kittung called Ramma to cut it and told him how to take out the sap and drink it and that if he did so, he would be drunk and happy. When the sap was exhausted, he should cut down the tree, remove the pith, dry it, powder it and make it into gruel. In this way the whole tree would be used and nothing wasted.

29

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

An old man and woman had a pet pigeon. One day Ramma Kittung came to the house and wanted the pigeon for himself. So he said to the old man, 'I would like to make a covenanted friendship with you.' The old man said, 'Well, but what will you give me?' Ramma said, 'Tell me what you will give me.'

'No,' said the other. 'You must say what you will give me.' Ramma said, 'I will give you a certain cure for hunger and thirst.' The old man said, 'In that case I'll give you this pigeon.' Ramma then gave his friend the seeds of the sago palm, saying, 'Plant these and you will be able to drink the sap of the tree and eat its pith.'

Ramma went away, pleased with his pigeon. The man planted the seeds and a tree grew up. When it was mature the sap dripped down and the man put a pot to catch it. When the pot was full he drank it, all of it, for he shared this secret with no one, not even his wife, and he slept beneath the tree, looking forward to the drink he would have next morning. This he did day after day till the sap dried up. Then he went home and asked for something to eat. His wife was annoyed at his long neglect and said, 'There's nothing to eat here; go where you've been getting your food all this time.' The old man went off tiger-bellied with hunger and said to the palm, 'Are you going to give me any more wine or no?' The palm made no reply and the man cut it down with his axe. He removed the pith and took it home to his wife to make into flour.

30

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

Before the gods were born there was great peace in the world—there was no disease, no religion, no sacrifice, no priest. But when men learnt to drink palm-wine they used to go deep into the jungle to tap the trees; they learnt to steal from one another and there were many quarrels and riots.

One day Rajno Saora of Tassoi village went to get wine on Kinjang Hill: there he found a big tree with three spadices. He was pleased and climbed the tree. When he cut the first spadix out came two creatures like rats; they fell to the ground and disappeared. He cut the second and the same thing happened. He cut the third and the same thing happened. He hung a pot on each branch and went home.

That night gods came in a dream to Rajno Saora and said, 'You are to be a shaman and sacrifice to us.' So it was. This

is why sago-wine is used in sacrifice, for gods were born from the palm and regard the sap as their mother's milk.

31

HILL SAORA

Taraba, Ganjam District

Kumkum Saora and his wife lived on the Koloni Mountain. After many days two sons were born to them. That night in a dream Kittung gave Kumkum three seeds, saying, 'These are the seeds of the sago, toddy and date palms; plant them in your gardens or fields and the trees will serve you well.' When Kumkum awoke he found that there really were three seeds on his cot. He sowed them and tended the trees carefully. They soon grew to a good height. One day Kumkum's son fell ill, and the messengers of Jammasum came to take him away. But Kumkum was a powerful magician and he stopped them for the moment. Then he offered goats, pigs and chickens to the god, but the boy did not recover. At last Jammasum demanded the sap of palm trees, but Kumkum did not understand what this was. That night Kittung gave him a dream telling him how to get sap from the trees. 'When you cut the branch,' he said, 'offer chickens and rice in my name.' Kumkum got the sap and when he offered it to Jammasum the boy recovered.

32

HILL SAORA

Gunduruba, Koraput District

Girls and boys came from the Upper World to bathe in a pool among the Parlakimedi Mountains. After they had bathed and danced they made their way home. From the hair of one of the girls a pin of sambhar bone fell down and from it sprang the sago palm. Another pin fell to the ground and became the fruit of the palm. The boys had tufts of feathers in their turbans; one of these was lost and became the date palm. We worship these trees in the names of the boys and girls of the Upper World. The Dead drink the wine and so do we.

If the sap grows less, we throw rice three times round the tree and offer a fowl to Kittung so that as the clouds gather and give rain the tree will give plenty of sap.

Spirit of *Bassia latifolia*

33

BONDO

Bodapada, Koraput District

When Mahaprabhu sowed the seeds from which grew every kind of tree and shrub, he forgot the seeds of the *bosisum*.[1] After a long time he discovered them tied up in a leaf-bundle hanging from the roof of his house, and he took them to the forest and planted them. In due time the trees grew and bore flowers and fruit.

One day when Mahaprabhu was looking at his forest he noticed how many and how beautiful were the flowers of the *bosisum* and he picked a few and ate them. Soon he felt drowsy and lay down under the tree and went to sleep. Presently he got up and said to himself, 'How nice and peaceful one feels after eating this! If I give it to men they too will feel happy and restful.' So he called the peacock and jungle fowl and myna and told them to scatter the seeds all over the world. 'Eat as much of this as you can,' he said, 'and then let the seeds fall in your droppings everywhere.'

The birds ate and began to dance and as they danced they ate more till their bellies were full. The peacock and the jungle fowl let their droppings fall in the jungle near by, but the myna flew all over the world scattering the seed.

Then Mahaprabhu called Soma Bodnaik and told him, 'This is the *bosisum*. Eat the flowers and fruit and feed your children on it. You will get drunk on the juice. It is the tree of plenty and delight.'

[1] *Bassia latifolia*, Roxb., the precious tree which provides the tribesmen with oil, food and ardent spirits, is known as *bosisum* in Remo, *mahul* in Oriya, *irpu* in Koya and Gondi, *irpi* in Kui, *ippi* in Telugu, *abba* in Saora, and *mahua* or *mohwa* in Hindi.

34

GADABA

Rajuput, Koraput District

On Borandi Hill is a place called Metapadar. The shaman was a man named Bongtelbutru. One night Kondmuli, the god of the Konds, came to him, a turban on his head and an axe in his hand. He said to the shaman, 'Give me liquor to drink or I'll kill you with my axe.' When the shaman woke and remembered his dream he was afraid and went out to try and find some liquor. In his search he came to Barahandi Hill.

On this hill lived Sundimari Deota. He was distilling liquor in twelve different stills. The shaman got liquor from him and gave it to Kondmuli.

The smell of Sundimari Deota's twelve stills spread very widely and the gods assembled and asked for some. He refused to give it to them, and they got very angry and cut off his head. The head rolled down the hill to Rajuput village, where it turned into a stone. We sacrifice to it every year, and when we distil spirit we do so in the name of Sundimari Deota.

35

GADABA

Rajuput, Koraput District

The twelve Gadaba brothers were hunting on Borandi Hill. They killed a sambhar and sat down to skin it. On this hill lived Kanda Dokari and her granddaughter Gungiketni. When Gungiketni saw the twelve brothers, she was angry that they had come into her garden and she went quietly up behind them and kicked each of them in turn. They were very angry, and cut off the girl's nose.

Gungiketni thought she could not go to her mother without a nose and she turned herself into a stone where she stood. The bit of nose turned into a *mahul* tree.

The place where the girl became a stone is called Naktijola; the place where the bit of nose became a tree is called Mahulpadar. The villagers in the neighbourhood make sacrifices there every year.

36

JHORIA

Tarpadro, Koraput District

In Barpadro lived a Didayi and his wife. They had twenty-one sons. The Didayi got them all married. Then his wife died of a disease of the belly. On her chest was a tumour. They took her corpse out to burn it and during the cremation the tumour fell off and did not get burnt. That night the ghost came to the husband and said, 'From my tumour a tree has been born. Care for it well and within nine days there'll be flower and fruit. When the flower falls, put it in water and boil it on the fire. On my Dassa day, give it to the mourners to drink.' The Didayi cared for the tree and on the Dassa day gave the liquor to the neighbours. They all got drunk and began to dance. They heard the story and went to see the tree and called it *mohul*. This was how liquor was discovered.

37

KAMAR

Maraguda (Khariar), Kalahandi District

Father Mahadeo invited all mankind to a feast. When they had eaten their fill and were on the point of departure, Mahadeo said to his servants, 'Go with them secretly and listen to what they say.'

On their way home the guests were full of praise for their entertainment. 'What good food he gave us! What rich sweets, what ghee, what curds!' But presently some said, 'Yet there was nothing to give real pleasure.' And soon they were all saying, 'It is true, there is no real profit in just gorging oneself on heavy food.' The servants listened and returned and told their master what they had heard.[1]

Mahadeo hastily sent his servants after his guests and called them back. 'I had forgotten,' he said, 'the most important thing.' And now he served them with liquor, pot after pot of it.

[1] Cf. the Saora tale in MMI., p. 342.

They were soon drunk and began to dance and sing; they had never been so happy. 'What is this?' they demanded. 'And how is it made?' Before they left Mahadeo taught them how to make liquor and so carry their pleasure back to their homes.

38

KOYA

Chirpalli, Koraput District

A Kommar called Pandual made a stone house on Mardel Hill. He was very lonely there, for no one ever went to visit him. Husband and wife lived stark naked. There was an *irpu* tree and they used to make liquor and drinking, drinking night and day they lived happily intoxicated.

One day, two Sundi brothers went to get firewood from that hill and came to the stone house. They saw the naked Konds who ran into their house and hid. They locked the door and went down through the ground to the Under World. But they left their still and liquor behind and the Sundis, smelling a sweet smell, drank a little and were soon drunk. They resolved to make liquor themselves and took the still home with them.

39

KOND

Denguda, Ganjam District

When the earth and the clouds were made, Bura Pinnu and Pusuruli were living as man and wife. When human beings increased in number, Bura Pinnu and Pusuruli separated them into castes and each lived in his own house. In those days Pusuruli had an eye in her vulva. One day her eye went off on its own to bathe and fell into the water. Pusuruli picked it up and held it in her hand. She said, 'Let this eye become a tree and bear much fruit. As this eye fell out of my vulva of its own accord, so let the fruit fall of itself to the ground. As woman runs after man so let all men run after this tree.' She threw the eye on Golpara Hill. After twelve years the tree was bearing fruit and Pusuruli gave men dreams that there was *irpi* on

the hill and that they should collect and eat the fruit.

40

KUTTIA KOND

Girimel, Ganjam District

At the beginning of things, *irpi* seeds came up from below. In those days, there was nothing but rocks and water and Nirantali was living on a rock. She tied the seeds in a cloth round her waist.

When the earth and clouds were made, Nirantali went to Gunjianu River to bathe and some of the seeds fell to the ground. She returned to her house and took the rest of the seeds to Golpara Hill and planted them. A month later they sprouted and she made a fence all round them. The trees grew and in twelve years were ready. They said to Nirantali, 'We are born. But what of our children and our caste?'

Nirantali took one of the branches, put it in her mouth and blew. Her breath went to the tree and that year in the month of April there were flowers and soon after they fell to the ground. Nirantali called Paramugatti and took him to Golpara Hill and showed him the flowers saying, 'These are *irpi* flowers. Take them home, cook and eat them.' Paramugatti did so. Then Nirantali called the Paiks and gave them seed and said, 'Get oil from this.' Finally she called the Sundis and showed them how to make liquor from the flowers.

41

MURIA

Siunaguda, Koraput District

When Mahaprabhu taught men to drink palm-wine, they drank it themselves and offered it also to their gods. When the Muria cut their clearings they first sacrificed to Dongar Pen and gave him palm-wine. But he did not like the taste and in his annoyance began to make the people ill. They went to Mahaprabhu and said, 'We gave palm-wine to our gods, but it is no use: we are always falling ill.' Mahaprabhu sent Sukro, the shaman, with

them and said, 'Do your divination and ask the gods what they want.' The shaman sat down with his fan and called the gods and asked them what the matter was. They said, 'We can't drink this palm-wine. Give us *irpu* spirit.'

So the Muria went again to Mahaprabhu saying, 'Our gods want *irpu* spirit.' Mahaprabhu himself went with his men to Penga Parbhat where many *irpu* trees were growing: they collected the flowers and put them in a gold pot; when it was full, they put them in a silver pot, inserted a bamboo pipe and in this way distilled the spirit. Mahaprabhu gave a little to each man there. They were soon drunk and slept heavily. Mahaprabhu was pleased with them; he made their drunkenness peaceful and when they awoke not one had a pain in head or belly. Mahaprabhu then called the gods and told them to drink *irpu* spirit in future. Many of them refused, but Dongar Deo and the Dead were ready for it. Sukro sacrificed and gave them the spirit and after that there was no more disease.

42

MURIA

Chhindiguda, Koraput District

In a certain village lived a Muria and his wife. One day they went to a small hill and cut trees for a clearing. They sowed large millet there. They cleaned and weeded and then left the crop alone. But when the day of ripening came, wild animals came to eat the grain.

One day the Muria went to see how his field was and found half of it had been eaten by animals. He felt very despondent and came home and told his wife what had happened. They ate their dinner and then, taking their axes, went to the field. They cut some branches and made themselves a little hut. In the evening they slept in it. During the night they felt very cold, and the next day the Muria thought, 'Let's have a fire and sleep by it.'

Near the field was an *irpu* tree and beneath it a pile of old *irpu* flowers. The man and his wife gathered them and took them to the hut. They put grass and wood above them and set fire to it. When the flames blazed up, oil flowed from the flowers

like water. The man and woman picked it up, found it slippery, rubbed it on their heads and bodies and said to each other, 'This is oil.' Next day they decided to make something with which to extract this oil. They got two big stones, put the *irpu* flowers between them, weighted them heavily and soon oil came trickling out and they were able to catch it in a pot.

43

HILL SAORA

Okhra, Ganjam District

When Kittung planted trees, he forgot the *abba*. One day, when his wife was in her period he himself was cooking and she did the outside work, bringing water and watching the crops. Kittung had no water when the food was ready and he said, 'Bring some water quickly and I'll eat.' The woman took her pot and went for water. She filled the pot at a stream, put it on the bank and went back to the water to wash her hands and feet. Then she picked up the pot and put it on her head. On the bottom of the pot a little red earth stuck and got into her hair. She put the pot in the house and the two ate their dinner. At sleeping-time, the red earth fell from the woman's hair to the ground and Kittung seeing it said, 'What is this?' He thought his wife must have been flirting down by the river and that some boy had thrown mud at her. She said, 'No one put it there; there was no one there, it just came from my head.' Kittung picked up the earth and in front of his house made a little hole in the ground and buried it. He said, 'If it's true that no one put it in your hair, let a tree grow from it.' With that he went to sleep. During the night an *abba* tree sprang up. In the morning they saw it and the wife was pleased. 'Look,' she said. 'I was right.' Kittung said, 'This is the seed of your head. So its name will be *abba* (head).' Whenever the woman saw the tree, she reminded Kittung that she had been right.

44

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

Kittung went to bathe in a river, for he was very hot. He rubbed his body and some of the dirt came off. He said, 'What shall I do with this dirt? If I drop it in the river the fishes will eat it and that may injure me.' He dug a hole on the bank and buried the dirt. From this came an *abba* tree and bore flowers. Kittung went to eat them, he took one or two, found them very sweet and brought a basketful home. He dried and cooked them, then put them with water in a big pot. He made a hearth by a stream and this was the first still, where Kittung first made *abba* spirit.

45

RICE-BEER

BHUIYA

Nagira (Pal Lahara), Dhenkanal District

Boram Burha took a pot of rice and went to make a plough in the forest. One day he went to get leaves to cook as vegetables and found a lot of *pitāru* roots. He took them home, but mixed with them was another root, a root that makes men drunk. In his right hand was a *pitāru* root, in his left hand the other. The other root fell into the pot of rice, which was cooking on the fire, by accident. Boram Burha did not notice: he roasted the *pitāru* roots and filled his belly; he forgot all about the rice. For two or four days he forgot the rice, he was so pleased with the roots.

Then he went home. He would eat nothing. His wife thought, 'Some girl has been feeding him.' But presently she saw him eating *pitāru* roots. She was angry and by her magic made them bitter. After a few days Boram Burha again went to make his plough. He collected roots, but now he found them bitter and spat them out. He remembered the rice in the pot and looked at it. It was dry, so he poured water over it and drank it. Soon

he was very drunk. He made a tambourine and went dancing and drumming home to his wife.

When the old woman saw him she went to examine the pot that had made her old man so merry. She too drank and was soon intoxicated. Now she danced to his drumming. Since then we have made rice-beer.

PART THREE: THE ANIMAL WORLD

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

EARTHWORMS AND LEECHES

Earthworms

1

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu taught the different tribes and castes of men to weave, to make pots, to distil liquor and to cultivate, and he showed the Bondos how to work with axes and hoes on their hillsides. But the ground was so hard that they could not even scratch up a little earth with their hoes to cover their seeds. They went to Mahaprabhu and asked him what to do. Mahaprabhu sent them home and when they had gone he broke one of the necklaces round his wife's neck and made the thread into a worm. He sent it to the Jangar Hills to eat and excrete the soil and thus make it fine and pliable.

Mahaprabhu said to the worm, 'During the day live in the ground and spend your time eating earth. At night come up and I will put a light in your tail. It will attract ants and insects which you will be able to eat, and it will guide you along your path.'

The worms increased in number and soon they had made the soil of the whole world soft and porous. Since they were born from a woman's thread so, just as young girls are beautiful and old women ugly, worms are red and handsome in youth but black and wrinkled as they grow old.

2

KOND

Palki, Kalahandi District

Bhima Pinnu lived in the sky. One year there was no rain. The gods were worried about this and called Bhima Pinnu. He had a girdle and a loin-cloth tied to it. On his way to see the gods, his girdle broke and as it fell to the ground life

came to it and it moved of its own accord. Without a girdle, how could Bhima visit the gods? He sat down and stayed where he was. The gods came to him. The gods said, 'Your girdle has become an earthworm.'

Now whenever Bhima Pinnu brings his worms above ground, men know it is going to rain.

3

KUTTIA KOND

Surangbaro, Ganjam District

One day Nirantali went to pick leaves. As she came back, she tore her cloth on a thorn-bush. She pulled a thread out of her cloth and threw it into a stream and it became a worm and swam about until a fish ate it.

Nirantali then made a ball of red cord, tying it at one end. She threw it into the sky and said, 'Let your eggs drop with the rain and when they hatch, your children will burrow in the earth and live.' So the worm lived in the clouds and dropped its eggs onto the ground.

She said, 'The red cord will be a light for you', and so it is—a little light can be seen at the neck of a worm.

4

HILL SAORA

Dantara, Ganjam District

The earth was very solid in the old days and men and cattle were hard put to it to break the soil with their ploughs. 'How can I make the soil pliable?' wondered Kittung, but he could find no way to do it.

One day Kittung killed a goat and was eating the flesh; a scrap stuck in his teeth and hurt him. He pulled a bit of grass from the roof and picked his teeth: the scrap of meat came out and he had no more pain.

Kittung thought, 'This is a good toothpick: if I put it in the ground, perhaps it will make the soil soft.' He took it behind his house and buried it.

Next day Kittung dug it up and found it had turned into a worm. He was pleased and said, 'Stay here in the ground, eat it and excrete it, and so the soil will be pliable.'

One end of the toothpick was red with blood from Kittung's gums and this is why the worm is red at one end.

LEECHES

5

BINJHWAR

Golajhar, Sambalpur District

There was a Kichak who served Mahadeo. He served him so well that Mahadeo was pleased and gave him the boon of great strength. This made him very proud and lustful, and whenever he saw a pretty girl he would assault her and rob her of her virtue.

When Bhimsen heard of this he was very angry and decided to kill the Kichak.[1] After a long chase he caught him and squeezed him to a jelly between his hands and then burnt him in a fire.

After a time a shower of rain fell and from the ashes of the the dead Kichak there was born a leech.

Because Mahadeo had given the Kichak the promise that he should be strong and immortal, it is not possible to destroy a leech.

6

JHORIA

Pittayigaon, Koraput District

An old Brahmin had seven sons and one daughter. When the sons grew up he went to find wives for them. But nobody wanted to marry them, for they were ill-favoured and very poor.

[1] This is an echo of the story in the *Mahabharata*. The Pandu princes entered the service of the Raja of Virata. Draupadi excited the attentions of the Raja's brother-in-law, Kichaka. She rejected his advances and he insulted her. Bhima in revenge broke his bones to pieces and rolled his body into a ball.

When the eldest son heard this, he said, 'Well, anyway, I've got a sister; I'll marry her.' 'No, you won't,' said the girl.

Then each brother in turn tried to persuade her to marry him, but she refused every time. The youngest boy said, 'At all events, if you marry anyone else, I'll kill you.'

The girl was pretty enough and many men wanted to marry her, but she was so afraid of her brothers that she remained a virgin.

Mahaprabhu said to himself, 'If this girl does not marry, how will the world be populated?' He took the form of an old man and went to the girl and said, 'Granddaughter, I am thirsty; give me a little water to drink.' She brought a gourd of water for him; Mahaprabhu drank a little and secretly whispered a charm over it saying '*Chu-chu-chu*'. The girl drank some of the water herself. That very day she conceived and her belly began to swell. She was afraid that the brothers would kill her and she ran away to the nearest river. She went into the water up to the waist, and the blood that had filled her belly came out in clots and turned into leeches.

7

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

During their exile the five Pandava brothers went with Draupadi to live in the Bankajli forest. There lived a Kichak, a great and ugly ogre. When the brothers went out to hunt, the Kichak used to come to the house and frighten Draupadi. She told Bhimsen about it and he went out to catch the Kichak. He fought him on the banks of a tank; he killed him and crushed his body to pieces. The Kichak's blood poured from his nose and vent and from it was born the leech.[1]

[1] See note to ch. XIII, 5.

8

KOYA

Phulimetla, Koraput District

In a certain village lived a Dhobi and his wife. Some distance away was the great city ruled over by Ursung Deo Raja. One day the Raja sent for the Dhobi and said, 'You are appointed my Dhobi. You will wash my clothes and those of my citizens. You will get a pice for every cloth and two meals a day.' The Dhobi agreed to these terms and henceforth came daily to collect the dirty clothes from the city. Husband and wife got their food free and were able to save the money they earned. For twelve years they worked and gradually grew rich. They bought cows and buffaloes and built themselves a fine house. About this time the wife gave birth to a son and this boy grew up and in due course his father found him a wife and arranged his wedding. As the day approached the Dhobi began to get anxious about his guests. 'Where will they get sufficient water?' he wondered. So he spent a lot of money and had a tank made. The people were very pleased about this and the wedding was celebrated with dancing and feasting.

After this the villagers used to fetch their water from the tank and bathe there. There were special ghats for Paiks and Ronas, dirty people who used to throw the used ends of their tooth-twigs into the water. In time the tank grew filthy and a thick scum gathered on its surface. One day the Dhobi came to look at his tank. He saw the scum and the scraps and bits of wood floating there and told the Paiks and Ronas to clean it. But they refused. The Dhobi went to Deur and said, 'Look, I made this tank for all the people, but the Paiks and Ronas have spoilt it and now they refuse to clean it.' Deur put a little life-water into a bottle and told the Dhobi to burn any bits of wood lying on the bank and to scatter the water on the bits that were floating in the tank. 'If you do that,' he said, 'the bits of wood will get life in them and will turn into leeches. Don't tell anyone, and then when the Paiks and Ronas next go to bathe the leeches will bite them and you will have your revenge.' The Dhobi did as Deur advised and since then there have been leeches in tanks.

9

KUTTIA KOND

Sutaghati, Ganjam District

In Raibiji village there lived a Kond called Midru. He had seven daughters. They were all unmarried, but no one came to ask for them. Midru had no son and his daughters did all the work of the house and fields. One day the seven girls went to cut grass for brooms. On their way home at midday they came to a river and, as it was very hot, they took off their clothes and bathed. As they were bathing, the ring from the left hand of the eldest girl fell into the water. They tried very hard to find it, but it was carried away by the stream. The girl lost her temper and said, 'Let this ring become a creature which has no hands or feet and let it catch any animal or man who comes to the water. When it has drunk the blood, let it fall back again.' As a result of her curse the ring turned into a leech.

10

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

Nirantali went to a clump of bamboos to find a special piece with small knots. She could not find what she wanted in the forest, but when she came home, she found it behind her own house. She dug the bamboo out and cut the root into little pieces. At night she took them to the Penijju river and threw them in. The bits of bamboo turned into leeches.

11

PENGU

Malikot, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu lived on Sujagiri Hill and made men. It took him twelve years. He made the bodies and put life in them but forgot to give them eyes. Later he made models of eyes and was holding them in his hand when fire broke out in his house. He threw the eye-models away and ran to the house and put out the

fire. His wife was burnt, and he was very upset about it. He was so busy giving her medicine and reviving her that he again forgot all about giving men eyes. When his wife recovered, however, he remembered.

In the meantime, men were wandering blindly in the jungle, bumping against trees, tripping over stones, falling into streams. Mahaprabhu called them and they gathered round him. He looked for the eyes he had thrown away, but could not find them. He went to a lake and caught a very big leech and said, 'My wife wants your eyes to see with.' The leech took them out and gave them to him. Mahaprabhu gave them to men and they were able to see. Three or four days later Mahaprabhu told the leech, 'I've lost your eyes on the road, so you will have to live without them. But you can take your revenge, for when men come into your water you may drink their blood.'

12

HILL SAORA

Talasingi, Ganjam District

Bingbing Saora was the Chief of Tuasingi village. He had seven daughters and they were all married, except the youngest though she was the prettiest of all.

One day the young men of Tuasingi took the young girls to fish. With them went Bingbing's youngest daughter laughing and singing. When they had caught their fish, they stripped off their clothes and went into the river to bathe. The little girl did not know how to swim, but the boys teasing her and laughing pushed her into deep water and she was drowned. They agreed to conceal what had happened and when they got home they told the parents that the girl had been carried off by a tiger.

The girl's soul went to Kittung and said, 'I was drowned in the deep water and had no chance to bid my parents farewell. Now give me a boon that I may always live in the river.' Kittung blessed her saying, 'Live in the river and children will be born of your blood. You will drink the blood of those who drowned you.' He turned her into a leech and sent her back.

13

HILL SAORA

Ragaisingi, Koraput District

A Saora named Sakro had a daughter. She was still immature, but people came for her and she was betrothed.

Fifteen days before her marriage, the girl had her first period. When it was over and she went to bathe, she boiled her clothes and put mud on her head and washed it. As she stood on the bank of the stream combing her head, a hair fell into the water. She exclaimed, 'Become a leech and live always in the water.' And so it was.[1]

[1] For other references to leeches, see ch. XIV, 4.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ARTHROPODS

Ants

1

BHATTRA

Parsel, Koraput District

Budru was Chief of his village. He had twelve sons. When they grew up he got them married and they all, sons and wives and parents, lived together. One day all twenty-six went to a hill to cut their clearing. They sowed rice and millet but for two years the field gave a poor harvest. The third year they only sowed millet and this time the crop was very good. They reaped it and it took six days to thresh and winnow. When it was ready, they carried it home. This took fifteen days. They got very tired: there was a little millet left and they put it on one side and went home. The pile of grain turned into earth and then into insects. These were white ants. The Chief's son went after a week to get the grain but found the heap had turned into an ant-hill.

2

KOYA

Sikpalli, Koraput District

Chaitan was a Rona, Chief of his village. His assistant was called Kirtan: he too was a Rona. This Kirtan and Chaitan were great friends. They used to call people from other places, to settle in their village and so the place grew very large.

At this time there was very little grain. But as the farmers cultivated, the store of grain increased, and they learnt to use pestles and mortars to husk it.

One day Kirtan went to find a wife for his eldest son. After he had spent three months going from place to place, he came at last to Kumlaput where he found a suitable girl. He finished the discussions about the betrothal and returned home.

Now he had to prepare food and drink for the ceremony. He took from his bins five cartloads of rice and distributed it to every house for husking. His own household too was busy husking. One day Kirtan's daughter and the Chief's daughter were husking together at one pestle. As they were working the Kirtan's daughter sat down to sweep the grain into the mortar. But Chaitan's daughter continued to husk standing up, and by accident let the pestle fall on her friend's hand and cut her little finger. Some blood dripped over the rice. There was a pile of husks and the girl let her finger bleed over it. The girls took the bloody husks and rice to the garden and threw it away and it turned into red ants.

3

KOND

Amblibuwa, Koraput District

After Dakpaji had made a buffalo from the dirt of his body, he found some of the dirt left on his hand and rubbed it off. His wife saw it and picked it up and said, 'Make some living creature with this.' Dakpaji said, 'What could anyone make of so little?' She made a leaf-cup and put the dirt in it. After seven days she said to Dakpaji, 'Break this open and look what's inside.' Dakpaji looked and ants came swarming out all over his body, tickling and biting him. He was soon jumping about, shaking himself and trying to pick them off. He took them to a tree and put them there. He told the small black ants to live on the ground and the big ones to live in the trees. Thus the ant-caste began.

4

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

Nirantali bore a son, Desiduninga-Damanduninga. They cut the cord with an arrow on a small bit of wood and took the mother's bloody clothes, the cord and the wood outside and threw them away. A kite carried off the cord and let it fall into a

stream. Nirantali washed her clothes and when she returned told her husband what had happened. The boy heard what she said and asked, 'Who dared to carry off my cord?' The parents were frightened and cried, 'Only yesterday he was born and today he is talking!' They told him, 'A kite carried it off, but dropped it in a stream.' The boy ran to the stream and dived in and found his cord. As he was bringing it back, Pijju-Bibenj (who was in the water) caught him and said, 'Don't go: you and I will stay here together.' The boy said, 'But how will my parents know where I am?' Pijju-Bibenj wrote on the cord and threw it into the air, saying, 'Go to Nirantali.' The cord flew like a butterfly to Nirantali and settled before her, and she realized what had happened. This was the first writing and it was from this that reading and writing came to the world.

The boy had blood on his body. The water washed it off and it turned into a leech. The bit of wood turned into a crab.

The parents thought their boy would be hungry, so they took parched rice and a string of black beads and left them on the bank. They turned into red and black ants.

5

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

A man and his wife went to their clearing. They saw an ant-hill. They were working on the hill below it and thought somebody was hiding there. The man went to see who it was. When he found it was only an ant-hill, he kicked it to pieces and planted a bit of bamboo in the wreckage. He went back and told his wife. Two days later he went and found the ants had eaten the stick. He was astonished and told them what strong ants they were.

Now we believe that ants go out from their hills and eat leaves and sticks and turn them into manure and so we have good crops. So if, when we make a new settlement, we find it infested with ants, we think it very lucky. We never kill ants.

6

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

In Saphaganna, Rani-aru and Bindi-aru sent Paramugatti to Perengbali Hill for wax. Paramugatti found some in a crack between rocks and gave it to Rani-aru and Bindi-aru. They wanted to make ants: it took them a month to make three different kinds. The kind that was made only of wax was black—the women made its legs with hair from their own heads. They coloured the wax with red earth to make red ants, and with white ash for the white ants. They ground some chilli and blew it into the ants' mouths so that they could sting. They gave names to each, calling the black *batang,* the red *murari,* and the large red *mujori.* They took the red and white ants to a hill and put them in a tree, but they made the black ants live in the ground.

7

PARENGA

Rajubidai, Koraput District

There was a goddess called Gongadai. She had one daughter whose name was Naddidai. On the day Naddidai washed her clothes at the end of her first menstruation, she was accosted by a god called Dong-dong. He spoke sweetly to her, but when she did not reply, he seized her and tried to rape her. But she broke away from him and ran towards her home.

Dong-dong ran after her and was just about to catch her when her necklace broke and the red and black beads turned into red and black ants which swarmed over the god and bit him. Naddidai united the string from her hair and threw it down and this turned into a snake and it too bit him. Dong-dong left the girl and ran to and fro madly beating at the ants that covered his body. Gongadai came by, and he fell at her feet, begging to be forgiven. She told the ants to leave him alone, and they did so, but ever since there have been snakes and ants in the world.

Bees

8

DIDAYI

Amliwada, Koraput District

When men were first born none of them died and their number increased greatly and soon the earth began to be overcrowded. Men quarrelled and beat each other to get room to live. Rumrok saw it and wanted to lessen the number of people. So he made a bee and in its belly he put death and sent it to Piriguda where many Didayis lived. The bee sat on a tree in the middle of the village, and made its honey there. One day the headman's elder son climbed up to take the honey and the bee stung him and he died up in the tree. But the villagers divided the honey and ate it. They fell ill and many of them died. When about half of them were dead, Rumrok removed the poison from the bee and now its sting hurts but does not kill.

9

GADABA

Surgunnaput, Koraput District

When this Middle World was first made, there lived a boy called Nirgun who used to go about dancing with thirteen score girls. Presently came another boy, called Deogun, who also went about dancing with thirteen score girls. Nirgun played the fiddle, and Deogun played the flute. They drank a lot of millet-beer and danced, drunk and excited, all night long. One night, they danced till dawn and then they were too exhausted to go on their way. Nirgun and his girls turned into small bees, and Deogun and his girls turned into big bees.

So nowadays, whenever bees go anywhere, a big male bee leads the way humming loudly and the thirteen score female bees follow him.

10

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

Mother Earth had a young and beautiful daughter. Many gods came to marry her, but she refused them and they had to go home disappointed. A Dom Raja heard about this and decided that he would marry her himself. He took his army and set out to take her by force. When the girl heard they were coming she ran away to a neighbouring village. An old woman was sitting there preparing castor seeds for oil. The girl went to her and offered to help. But presently the Dom Raja came with his army searching for her. The girl jumped up and putting a lot of castor seeds in a winnowing-fan threw them towards the Raja saying, 'Go and save me.' The seeds turned into bees. They attacked the Raja and his army and quickly put them to flight.

11

JHORIA

Sukku, Koraput District

Bhima Deota had a great herd of cows and buffaloes. When the Middle World was created, he took his cattle there for pasture. But he could not find water, and the cattle grew thin and sick, for without water they could not eat. Bhima decided to go to find water, but he knew it would take a long time. So he made a house for his buffaloes in a bombax tree and another house for his cows in a tamarind. He blew on them and they turned into bees and settled among the branches. Then Bhima went away to fetch water.

As he went along he saw a great ladder reaching up into the sky. 'This is why we are not getting any rain,' he thought, and he hit the ladder hard with his great stick and broke it. Immediately the rain came pouring down, and the ladder fell to the earth in pieces, and still may be seen as the little bare hills round Koraput.

Indra Raja was very angry with Bhima for breaking his ladder and he took him prisoner and threw him into jail. The cattle therefore have always remained as bees, and this is why bees are not owned by anybody.

12

KOND

Kesaraguda, Ganjam District

Long ago Bendipalu and his wife Ranipalu were born in a hollow bamboo at Saphaganna. Bendipalu and Ranipalu made their clearing on Golapara Hill and sowed pulse, maize and beans. When the pulse was ready, they put it to dry for a month in the sun. When it was dry they went to thresh and winnow it. Whatever was unripe was blown away; whatever was ripe fell to the ground. When they had finished, Ranipalu picked up what had blown away and put it in her fan, for she thought, 'If I turn this into some flying creature, no animal will eat it. And I will make it a home like a fan.' She threw it into the air crying, 'Become a bee and fly.' The chaff turned into a swarm of bees, which flew away to Kandamara Hill and made their home there.

13

KOND

Pusbari, Kalahandi District

Paramugatti planted a lot of flowers in front of his house. Bees came and drank the juice and the flowers dried up. So Paramugatti went to Nirantali and said, 'I've planted some nice flowers, but these bees have spoilt them.' Nirantali said, 'Very well, kill them.'

Next time the bees came, Paramugatti caught them and tied each of them with cord and let them go, thinking, 'They can't fly now and when Mangragatti comes we'll kill them.' But the bees flew into the air and when Paramugatti ran after them, trying to kill them, they led him to their house where they had many relatives. 'Why have you come?' they asked. 'Because some of your people stole the juice of my flowers,' said Paramugatti.

They said, 'If you trouble us, we'll bite you till you're dead. It is true that we drink your juice, but you will be able to eat our excreta.' Paramugatti said, 'How can I?' and went to Nirantali and said, 'You told me to kill these bees and all they say is, "Eat our excreta".' Nirantali said, 'Then you two, Paramugatti and Mangragatti, go and kill them.' They went and began to kill them but the bees swarmed over them and bit them and they ran screaming to Nirantali. She said, 'Light a fire and smoke them out. But the bees still bit them. That night Nirantali herself went to smoke out the bees. She got their excreta and gave it to the others to eat. They found it very sweet and were pleased. Nirantali said, 'As a pig eats man's excreta and finds it sweet, so you eat the bees' excreta.'

14

KUTTIA KOND

Sikabaru, Ganjam District

Nirantali brought some sago pith and powdered it, but some undried bits were left. She put them in her fan and placed it on a platform to dry while she went for some water to the river. When she got back she found the big bits had turned into large bees, the small into little bees and they were all buzzing round the place where she had last pissed. She thought her servants had stolen the sago pith and beat them, but they said, 'Go and look where you last pissed and you'll find it all there.' Nirantali went and saw that the bees were there enjoying themselves. She called Paramugatti and told him what to do. That night he caught the bees in a cloth and took them to a hollow tree and they made their hive there.

15

KUTTIA KOND

Susabata, Ganjam District

The bee went to bathe in the river. It removed its eyes and ears, put them on the bank and went into the water. The fly came and stole the eyes and ears and sat on a branch of a tree

near by. The sambhar came and said, 'What have you got there?' The fly said, 'The bee's eyes and ears.' The sambhar said, 'Give them to me.' The fly said, 'You've got two eyes and two ears already; what will you do with more?' The sambhar said, 'With two eyes I see by day, I'll see with these others by night.' The fly gave it the eyes. The bee then flew about without eyes or ears. The ant went to it and said, 'Why are you flying about blindly?' The bee said, 'Someone has taken my eyes.' The ant said, 'The fly took them and gave them to the sambhar.' Since then the bee has been without eyes or ears.

16

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

After Nirantali had created the earth and the clouds, she made Bindrabari Lohar and got ore for him and taught him his craft. One day Nirantali and Bindrabari Lohar discussed how to make men and other living creatures. 'If we make them with earth, they will break: whatever can we use?'

Bindrabari Lohar said, 'Let us first make bees. We'll take them to a hill and put them under stones and they will make wax out of which we can fashion these living creatures.'

Nirantali went to her birth-place and tried to get some clay. But there were only rocks; at last, however, she managed to get a pinch of black earth. With this she made a bee; she put her own hair as its feet and made its entrails of her own eye-lashes, and its liver of dirt from her eyes. She took it to Bindrabari Lohar who put it in his kiln and blew his bellows; the bee's belly was quickly filled with fire and its body became black. Life came into it and it flew up and sat on Nirantali's cheek and bit it. Her cheek swelled and she was in great pain. She caught the bee and took it to Tikawali Hill where there was a hollow rock and put it there. She said, 'Live and make wax; you will have a thousand children at a time.'

17

PARENGA

Rupodai, Koraput District

A Raja had a daughter whose name was Rupodai. She was beautiful as a blazing fire. Even gods came to marry her, but she refused them all. The Raja kept a serving-boy for her, and to this she agreed. But the Raja was so afraid that some god would carry her off that he would not allow her to go out of the house.

One day the Raja and his son-in-law went out hunting; they were a long time, and Rupodai got bored and tired. She cooked the supper, cleaned the house and then went outside to watch the road for their return. As she was standing there, Jama Deota rode up on his horse, and carried her away.

When the Raja and the boy returned, they found the house empty and went off to find the girl. They searched for many months, and in the course of their travels they both fell ill and died. A kite pecked out one of the eyes of the dead boy. The eye turned into a bumble-bee and flew away to search for Rupodai. But it has never found her, for it was Jama Deota, the god of death, who carried her away.

18

HILL SAORA

Bungding, Koraput District

Kittung made the bees and hid them under a stone. They lived there for a long time, but Kittung gave them no food. They got very hungry and many of them died. One day Kittung and his wife went to the place and when the bees saw them they were angry. 'He made us but he has given us nothing to eat.' They swarmed over him and began to bite. Kittung's wife said, 'Whatever is this?' Kittung said, 'They are some things I made. I gave them a place to live in, but I forgot to give them food. That is why they are angry.' Kittung's wife said to the bees, 'I'll give you food but don't bite my husband.' She looked at their mouths and found them soft and tender. She said, 'What they want is

juice from flowers.' She took the bees to a *ramtilla* field and told them to sit on the flowers and suck the sweet juice. She told them how to build houses where they could store the juice and keep their children.

Butterflies

19

KUTTIA KOND

Turli, Ganjam District

Nirantali once went to Karanja from Saphaganna. As she was going along the path through the rice fields, there was a big storm of wind and it blew a *phaphan* flower to her. The flower sparkled in the sun. When Nirantali saw it, she ran to it and picked it up and thought, 'If I put life in it, it will fly about and then come back to Saphaganna.' She took some dirt from her breast and made a body, using the flower petals for wings. She made the legs with grass.

The butterfly said, 'Why have you made me and what am I to eat?' Nirantali said, 'Eat the mud on which men piss and say there. In October you'll have children and in April you'll die.'

20

PARENGA

Rupodai, Koraput District

Mother Lakshmi had a daughter named Sitiyadai. One day the girl went with the other village maidens to see the Balijatra dance. In her hair she tied white Queen of the Night flowers. As she went along, the flowers dried and were about to fall. She took them from her hair and carried them in her hand. 'I mustn't let them fall on the ground; they are far too pretty,' she thought. She puffed them away and they turned into butterflies.

21

HILL SAORA

Dantara, Ganjam District

In Tulubur the Saoras were celebrating Harvest Festival of red gram. The boys and girls took their drums to the clearings to fetch the pulse and in the evening came home dancing with it. They put the pulse in Babusum's shrine. They danced far into the night, then each went to his own house to eat. Last of all, the trumpet-player went home: on the way the mouth of the trumpet fell down in the place where people used to piss. It got dirty, so the boy did not pick it up. He said, 'I made you with a lot of trouble but all you do is to fall into piss. Become a butterfly and stay there always.' He whistled and at once a cloud of butterflies flew up into the air.

Cockroaches

22

SAORA

Nawagaon, Ganjam District

One day Mahaprabhu arose to wander round the earth. He saw that all living creatures had been made, but one: there were no cockroaches. As he was going home, he sat weary by the road. His ear began to itch and he scratched it with a twig and brought out a little dirt. He put it under a stone and began to whistle. As he whistled life came into the dirt and it replied, '*Chi-chi-chi*'.

Mahaprabhu went home leaving the cockroach under the stone. There was a village near by. There was a man who had a house outside the village where he lived all alone. At night he went to sleep in the village. The cockroach saw this and one day stopped the man on the road saying, 'Where do you go every evening?' The man said, 'I'm lonely at home, so I go to sleep in the village.' The cockroach said, 'Men have no wisdom: here am I, a small creature under a stone. Go home and I'll keep you company and at night I'll sing to you and drive away your fears.'

The man put the cockroach on his shoulder and took it home. Every night it used to sing him to sleep.

Crabs

23

BHUNJIA

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

There was a potter, a mighty rogue. He purposely made his pots in such a way that they would break quickly and thus force the people to come to him for more. After a time the neighbours wearied of his tricks and gave him such a beating that he died. They carried his body to a stream and threw it in crying, 'Now make your pots in the water and try your tricks on the crocodiles and little fishes.'

The potter's body turned into a crab. That is why the crab is always afraid of human beings and yet at the same time is very cunning.

24

GADABA

Challanguda, Koraput District

There was a very old goddess called Simadai; she had teeth like a pig's. There was a grown-up daughter, Usumdai, but no one wanted to marry her, for when they saw her mother's teeth, they were afraid.

One day Simadai said to herself, 'There is no man for my daughter. I must find someone for her.' She went to see the old woman on Humayu Hill. This woman had a grown-up son named Sitalmanda. But when Simadai reached the place, she found the old woman dead and her son sitting in tears by the corpse. Simadai said to him, 'Don't cry. She was my elder sister, and you must come and stay with me.'

Simadai took the boy to her house, and after a time he married Usumdai. One day, when Usumdai went to bathe at the end of her period, she was cleaning her hair with her comb, and the

comb fell into the water and turned into a crab. This is why a crab has legs like the teeth of a comb.

25

KONDA DORA

Phanguda, Koraput District

Panchadasi Rani had one son. One day the Raja took the Rani to see her mother. They travelled, travelled for eight days and nine nights and on the tenth day reached their destination.

That Raja, the Rani's father, had fenced his kingdom round with thorns. There were only two doors, one to go in by and one to go out by. At each door stood a porter. At the first door was a crab: at the second a spider.

When the Raja and Rani arrived the crab would not let them in. The Raja argued with it and when it still refused, killed it with his axe. He cut off the two claws and they flew up into the air. The Rani cried, 'This is my father's porter and you've killed him. Make him alive or I won't go home with you.' The Raja took some dirt from his body and made two claws for the crab and said, 'Live, but without a head.' But at least he made it alive. He said to the claws in the sky, 'Become a rainbow and tell men when rain will fall.'

26

KUTTIA KOND

Malaka, Ganjam District

Nirantali called Paramugatti to Saphaganna and told him to count all living creatures, men and animals. This took eight days, then it was done. Paramugatti said to Nirantali, 'I found every kind of creature, but there are no crabs.' Nirantali said, 'Then we must make some. Go and get some wax.'

Paramugatti went to Tikawalli Hill and brought wax and Nirantali considered how best to use it. 'There are so many kinds of creatures,' she thought, 'some round, some long, some thin, some thick.' In the end she took the wax in her hand and made it the shape of her palm. She thought, 'If I make a

head for it, all creatures will die.' So she left out a head, but put the mouth in the chest and the eyes in the shoulders.

But there was nowhere for the creature to live, so Nirantali put it under a stone in the Gunjianu River and told it to eat green reeds, fish and frogs.

27

PARENGA

Tetlipada, Koraput District

In the Middle World men died, but there was no path by which their ghosts could ascend to the Upper World or descend to the Lower World. So they had to remain on earth and were a nuisance to everyone.

Ispur Mahaprabhu said to himself, 'I must do something about this.' He took a *siāri* leaf and peeled off the fibres and threw them on the ground saying, 'Make a path to the Upper World.' The fibre turned into a spider and it spun a thread for the ghosts to climb by.

Mahaprabhu picked up a *siāri* seed and held it in his hand. He threw it on the ground saying, 'Make a path to the Lower World.' The seed turned into a crab and it dug a burrow for the ghosts to descend by.

28

SAORA

Gariaguda, Ganjam District

Buddhu Saora used to go every day to catch fish in his trap. Another Saora called Kapoli also went to the same place and put his trap a little higher up the stream. In this way he caught all the fish. This annoyed Buddhu and one day he threw a pebble into the stream saying, 'Go Mahaprabhu, cut through his trap and fill it with holes.' As the stone fell into the water, it grew eight legs and two claws. It went upstream and made holes in Kapoli's trap so that the fish escaped and were caught in Buddhu's.

29

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

When Sura Kittung was quite a little girl, her mother died. So there was no one to tell her about the menstrual period, and when the girl matured and saw the blood for the first time, she was terrified. She did not dare tell her father what had happened, but she got some mud and stopped up the place with it, and then went on with her work as usual.

But when she went to bathe, the girl forgot that she had put the mud there and it came out in the water and turned into a crab and blood poured out and turned into a leech. Some of her hairs fell out and turned into prawns. When she had finished bathing she went home.

Some days afterwards, Sura's father went to bathe in the same place and saw the crabs and prawns and leeches and wondered where they had come from. When he got home, he asked his daughter and she told him what had happened.

30

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

Jammasum looked down from the sky and saw men relieving themselves in water, spitting in it, blowing their noses over it, soiling it in every possible way. He thought this was all very messy, so he blew his nose between his fingers and sprinkled the mucus over the water saying, 'Go and become a fish and eat all the dirt in the water and purify it.'

He did his hair with his comb and some hairs came out. He rubbed a little dirt from his body and made a crab of it. He put ten bits of wood for legs and threw it into the water and told it to live in a hole and keep the water clean.

31

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

One day long ago Kittung went to draw water from a stream. There was a hole in his pot and the water began to leak; Kittung tried to stop the hole with mud, but it was no good. At last he cut off a bit of his own flesh, a bit from his hand, and put it into the hole. But even this did not stop the leak.

Kittung now thought, 'I've cut off a bit of my own flesh: I mustn't waste it. I'll make some sort of creature with it.' He stuck the flesh on a stick, put it on the ground and said, 'Become a crab and burrow down to get good earth which will stop the holes in pots.'

32

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

The tiger and the crab were made last of all. When Kittung made the tiger, he cut a bit of *kosum* bark to fix on its forehead. There was a bit of wood, four fingers in breadth, left over. When the tiger was finished and Kittung went to clean the place, he hit his foot against the bit of wood and blood flowed from the cut. Kittung was angry and threw the wood into a stream. There it turned into a crab and began crawling towards Kittung. Kittung said, 'Don't come to me, but stay in the water. You'll be the tiger of the river.'[1]

33

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

Kittung used to live on Mancholi Hill. When the crab was first created it had no claws and found it difficult to get

[1] In Saora, the crab is *kinnadān*, literally, 'tiger of the water'.

its food. It went wandering through the jungle until it came to the spring on Mancholi Hill where Kittung used to get his water.

One day at noon Kittung's wife went to bathe there and found that the crab had crawled out of the water onto a rock and was weeping. Kittung's wife asked it what the matter was. The crab said, 'I have a good body and legs but no hands and so I cannot get food to eat and I've been hungry since the day I was born.' Kittung's wife was sorry and wondered what to do. In her abstraction she put her hand to her thing and pulled out two hairs; she stuck these, one on each side of the crab and said, 'Now you have hands and you'll be able to dig a house for yourself and get all the food you want.'[1]

Crickets

34

KOYA

Kondapalli, Koraput District

In Mohanpur there was a carpenter called Budra. This carpenter would not let his wife go anywhere. One day Deur visited him and said, 'Make me a bed. Don't let anyone see you doing it: go to the jungle and make it secretly.' Budra took his wife and baby son and went to Tumri Dongar and made a little hut to live in. He went to get wood for the cot and after a long search found a *bija* tree. He cut it and took the wood to his hut and began work. It took him twenty-one days and when the cot was ready, his wife said, 'There's no wood to cook with: do go and cut me a little.' Budra collected some shavings and threw them to her. One bit stuck on her breast and she threw it back at her husband. It hit him and fell to the ground and turned into a cricket and hopped about. Budra tried to catch it but it hid under a stone. Budra took the bed to Deur and left the cricket in the forest.

[1] For other stories about crabs, see ch. XIV, 4; ch. XV, 19; ch. XVI, 30.

35

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

There was a man with a son and a daughter. There were no other people in their village. No one came to marry the girl. The boy said, 'No one comes for you: you and I will marry.' They married. Afterwards people came for the girl. She said, 'No, I've married my brother.' Everyone laughed at them and they were ashamed. 'Come, let's go and hide in the jungle.' There was a great pit: the girl jumped down first, he followed her. So they died. Their souls flew up *jhi-jhi-jhi* and sat on the branch of a tree. This is why, whenever anyone passes, crickets keep quiet or jump away in shame.

Fire-flies

36

GADABA

Thal Duralu, Koraput District

Shortly after the making of the Middle World, there was a great quarrel among the gods as to who should be greatest. They hit each other with their swords, they fought with their fists, they kicked and abused each other; there was a shocking quarrel. Many of the gods were killed and the survivors threw their bodies into a stream. The bones and the flesh rotted, but the eyes remained and turned into fire-flies.

That is why they shine in the dark, for they are gods' eyes.

37

KAMAR

Maraguda (Khariar), Kalahandi District

There was an old man. He had just one daughter, but no son and his wife was dead. He did not want to lose the girl so he got a boy to serve for her and live in the house.

One day the youth said to his father-in-law, 'Today I am

going to bale out water for fish.' The old man said, 'But the sun is going down; the day is ended; don't go now, we'll go tomorrow.' But the boy insisted on going and forced his wife and her father to go with him.

As they were baling out the water, darkness fell and the old man said, 'Let's go home; we can't do anything in the dark; tomorrow we'll return and get the fish.' Unwillingly the youth agreed and they turned their steps homeward.

But as they were going a branch across the path caught the youth's eye and plucked it out. It fell to the ground and turned into a fire-fly.

38

KOYA

Dudimetla, Koraput District

A Komti and his wife lived in a village. They had three sons. They married and went to live separately. By trading the eldest brother grew very rich. The two younger brothers, however, remained poor. After a time they thought, 'It's no use keeping a shop here: let's go somewhere else.' They loaded their horses with oil-seed and went to a city and there sold their goods at a high profit. They did this regularly and in time they grew even richer than the eldest brother.

The youngest brother's wife was a very mean woman. Never did she give to a beggar. There was an old blind woman living with the family and the Komti gave her food daily. But the wife, angry at this waste of food and having to look after her, rebelled. One evening, when supper came, she put burning coals in the dish and gave it to the old woman. She picked up the coals and burnt her fingers. She was very sad and left the house at once.

After a time, the wife fell ill and died. Her soul went to Deur. He said, 'You gave the blind woman coals to eat and burnt her, so I m going to burn you. You will be born where men excrete and you will always have fire burning in your backside.' So it turned out and the woman became the first fire-fly.

39

KOND

Pukur, Ganjam District

Formerly Sujamajenja had teeth in her vagina. They had fire in them and used to shine. But Dakpaji pulled them out with a cord and buried them with the cord in his house. Sujamajenja and Dakpaji's children grew up, married and built their separate homes. Then the parents lived alone for twelve years.

One day Sujamajenja remembered her teeth and asked Dakpaji to dig them up. He did so and found the shining teeth had turned into male and female fire-flies. They flew into the air and danced about round Sujamajenja and Dakpaji. They sent them to live in streams and groves, but told them that in the rains they could take shelter in people's houses.

40

KOND

Palki, Kalahandi District

Paramugatti felled the trees of his clearing and sowed millet. He reaped the crop and put it on a platform to dry. Some of the grain was left in the clearing. Paramugatti went to watch the field but he used to drink so much palm-wine that he used to fall asleep and the deer destroyed the crop unchecked. One day Nirantali got very angry and abused him. That night she herself went to the clearing. She pulled a hair from her armpit, tied it to an ear of millet and said, 'Go and sting Paramugatti.' It turned into a mosquito and multiplied and the swarm settled down to the task of stinging Paramugatti. He awoke and thought, 'If I make a fire, it will drive them away.' He set fire to the stack of millet and the sparks turned into fire-flies, which flew to Nirantali's house. They cried '*Jig-jag, jig-jag*' and Nirantali realized what had happened.

41

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

One year there was no rain. Nirantali tried to bring it down but she was not strong enough. She got some wax to make a fire-fly. She made its wings of the bombax flower. In its tail she put a spark of fire, so when it breathed it shone. When it was ready, she sent it to Birmenja. It went to him and wept saying, 'I have seven little babies and if it does not rain they'll die and half mankind will die. If you have any love for men and animals, send them rain. If you don't, it will be a great sin.' Birmenja said, 'Well, I'll send rain: you go back and look after your babies.'

Nirantali said to the fire-fly, 'Streams and trees will be your dwellings. Lay your eggs at the beginning of the rains; in the following month your children will be born. Even if you die, the light in your tail won't go out. You will always have a light in your house.'

Sometimes bats take the fire-flies to their houses and keep them for light; sometimes they feed their children on them, for this is the only light they can bear to see.[1]

GRASSHOPPERS

42

GADABA

Onumal, Koraput District

There was a very old woman called Onta. She had five sons, all married with a lot of children: one had four, one six, a third eight and so on. Onta used to look after the babies while their parents were out in the fields. One day she was drying castor seeds, and she made the children sit round and watch her. They kept on crying and quarrelling, and she was quite unable to do any work. When the sun rose high in the sky and heated the castor seeds, they spilt open with a cracking noise and shot the

[1] See also ch. XXX, 2.

kernels about. This amused the children and they soon stopped crying. Onta said to herself, 'That's the way to keep them quiet.' She threw some castor shells at them and the shells turned into grasshoppers and began to hop about to the great delight of the children.

43

KOYA

Tondapalli, Koraput District

When men were first born and went to live in separate villages, a Koya called Budra went to a small hill, cut a clearing and made himself a little hut. Gradually other Koyas came until there was a hamlet of ten houses. After the Koyas came Doms, Paiks and Brahmins and it grew into a big village.

The boys there played every kind of game. A Paik boy made a block of bamboo to play *ibba.*[1] One day six boys joined him and Deur came in the form of a Koya to watch. When one boy struck the *ibba,* it flew up and broke and turned into a grasshopper. It began to fly and Deur said, 'You'll never see that again,' so they let it go.

44

KOND

Sikerguda, Kalahandi District

Paramugatti went to cut millet. As he was cutting it with his knife there hopped from a plant a little insect and went into his loin-cloth. Paramugatti continued cutting and the insect grew wings and began to cry '*Pew-pew-pew*'. Paramugatti looked in his cloth for it and said, 'Where've you come from?' It said, 'I've grown up in your loin-cloth. And now what am I to eat? Paramugatti said, 'When the crops are ripe, drink the juice of their fruit.'

But Tana Pinnu said, 'How can this creature eat us first? Men must first sacrifice, then it can eat.' Paramugatti said, 'Very well, and told the grasshopper not to eat before the festival. But it

[1] Similar to the common *gilli* game.

disobeyed and so its belly and back changed places. The grasshopper went to Paramugatti and said, 'Look,' but Paramugatti said, 'That's your punishment.'

45

KUTTIA KOND

Girimel, Ganjam District

Before Nirantali was born, while she was still inside the earth, she made an egg of wax and hid it in the hollow branch of a dry tree. Then she broke the earth and came up, forgetting all about the egg. But when men, gods and animals were born, she remembered it and went to get it, but found three chicks had hatched out. They had nothing to eat and were still blind. Nirantali took them up to the world with her; for their food she made grasshoppers and for fifteen days fed them herself. Strength came to them and their eyes opened. Nirantali kept them with her and when they went to feed she called '*Jarka-jarka*' and they flew back to the house.

Insects and Grubs

46

KOYA

Phulimetla, Koraput District

Soon after men were created, the different castes went to live separately. Then children were born and men increased in number. The first men died and only the new men were left. They tilled the land and raised crops for food. For a long time they ate and drank happily. Then one day in the south country there was a great famine which lasted seven years. The stores of grain were exhausted and there was such great privation that many killed and ate one another.

There was a village of fifty Chandal houses: they used to live on cows. When they finished all the cattle they left the place. Wherever they went, they ate men and cattle, whatever they could get. But what they grew to like was human flesh and they came

to scorn mere grain. When they left their land, they got some grain but had no appetite for it. When men heard they were coming they deserted their villages and lived in the forest.

In a certain village there were twenty-one prostitutes. One day they heard the Chandals were coming. They were frightened and when the Chandals reached the next village they sought somewhere to hide. In that village was a great fig tree, heavy with fruit. They called on their Mohini Pen: 'Hide us in this fruit,' they cried. Mahaprabhu made a hole in the fruit and put the twenty-one sisters in it and shut it so that when the Chandals came to the village they found nothing to eat and Mahaprabhu killed them. But he left the twenty-one prostitutes in the fruit and they turned into insects. The fruit fell and burst open. The insects came out and spread through the world.[1]

47

KOYA

Tamsa, Koraput District

In Ajarupali village lived a Komti called Narsing. He was very rich, with many servants. He had two sons. The boys grew up and married and lived in their father's house with their wives. It was this Komti's habit never to give rice to his sons or daughters-in-law. All the rice from his fields he shut up in his bins. His daughters-in-law were annoyed at this, for they had to bring rice all the way from their parents' houses.

The sons and their wives plotted to hire a thief to remove the grain. The elder son's wife said, 'When I die, I'll ask Deur to send me back as an insect to eat this man's rice.' Soon the girl did fall ill and die. Her soul went to Deur and said, 'In my father-in-law's house is a great store of rice, and he never gives it to anybody, but hoards it for himself. Now send me back as a weevil which will eat it all up and leave nothing but chaff.' Deur said, 'Your father was mean (*sum*), so go as a weevil (*kum*) and live in his rice where you will bear many children which will rob him of his hoard.'

[1] Cf. the Bhattra and Kond stories, ch. IX, 51 and 54, about insects in the fig.

48

KOND

Palki, Kalahandi District

Kirapakenj and Kirasujenj sowed rice in their field and when the rice grew and weeding-time came, they called everyone to help. A boy came with the rest, but when at midday the others ate their food, this boy had nothing. He was very hungry and picked some grass, shredding it with his teeth. It took him a long time to fill his belly and he was late in going to work. Kirapakenj and Kirasujenj thought he was stealing rice and beat him so hard that they broke one of his teeth. The boy went crying to Nirantali and said, 'I was so hungry I had to chew grass and Kirapakenj and Kirasujenj knocked out one of my teeth.' Nirantali said, 'That tooth will become an insect which will destroy their crop.'

49

HILL SAORA

Dariambo, Ganjam District

In the old days people kept their grain for twelve or twenty years in their bins and it never went bad or was eaten by insects. One day, just before the rains, Jammolsum called the Saoras and distributed seed-grain to them. They took it home, and Jammolsum put what was left back in his bin. He clapped his hands over it to remove the dust and when the dust fell it turned into weevils.

The weevils abused Jammolsum saying, 'Why have you created us? What have we got to live on?' Jammolsum said, 'Live in the grain-bin and eat the grain. When you are reborn after death, I will put you inside the grain and you can eat it from within.'

50

HILL SAORA

Ragaisingi, Ganjam District

In Malasingi village were many Saoras. Manglu was the headman. He had five daughters, none of whom were married. One day they all went for firewood. They cut it and were carrying it back, when they met some Saora boys and played and flirted with them. The shaman's son pulled off the necklace from the headman's eldest daughter. She chased him but he would not give it back. He wanted to hide it in the ground, but the earth was very hard, so he went to a date palm and found some soft earth below it and buried it there. When he came back, the girl begged for her necklace, but he said, 'When you lie with me, you'll get it back.' So she agreed and they slept together under the tree. The boy dug up the necklace, but it had turned into a chain of grubs. The boy and girl were frightened and ran away. Kittung told the grubs to live in the tree and live on its sap.

LAC INSECTS

51

GOND

Chhindiguda, Koraput District

The Chief of Kolhapur had five sons. His fields were the biggest in the village. He had twenty-one farm-hands. All together there were twenty-seven ploughs working on his land. One day one of his servants beat his wife in a temper and she ran away to her parents' house. He let her be and did not go to fetch her. But the Chief abused him and said, 'Go and get your wife.'

The man took five friends and they went to the house. He spent two days there and on the third day they all went back with the wife. They passed a field on the bank of which was a *kosum* tree. They sat below the tree to cook their midday meal. In the field was a rat and they hunted it, digging it out of

its hole. When they got it out, it escaped and they ran after it. One of them hit it with his stick and broke the skin. It ran bleeding up the trunk of the *kosum* tree. They threw stones at it from below and the rat jumped from branch to branch in terror, dropping blood everywhere. At last the travellers gave up the hunt and after eating their meal they went home.

Wherever the rat's blood fell, insects grew and thus the blood turned into lac.

LICE

52

BINJHWAR

Achanakpur, Sambalpur District

One day a great crowd of women visited the shrine of a Mata to offer sacrifice. One of them put a handful of oil-seeds at the Mata's feet and the rest gave incense and flowers. But the Mata was not satisfied with their offerings and as they were going away she picked up the seeds and threw them at the women. The seeds fell in their hair and turned into lice.

53

KAMAR

Bharia (Khariar), Kalahandi District

One day long ago Father Mahadeo and Mother Parvati made a sweet of oil-seed. But when they had it ready they could not decide what to do with it. Mother Parvati took two seeds out of the sweet, said a charm over them and threw them onto Father Mahadeo's body, where they turned into bugs. Father Mahadeo took two seeds out of the sweet, said a charm over them and threw them into Mother Parvati's hair, where they turned into lice.

54

KOND

Palki, Kalahandi District

Paramugatti went to Nirantali. 'You made us,' he said, 'and how well you've made our hands and feet! But there's nothing for our heads.' Nirantali put sesamum seeds and little white flowers in his hair and said, 'Go, I give you these. He who has more lice in his hair will have more wealth.' And the Konds still think it is very lucky to have lice in the hair.

55

KOND

Palki, Kalahandi District

Rani-aru and Paramugatti were sleeping together on one cot. When they got to work, some water fell on them. Rani-aru touched it and said, 'What is this?' She was going to throw it away. But he said, 'Don't throw it away; smear it on the cot and our name will remain for ever.' Rani-aru smeared it on the cot and it turned into bugs. She said, 'What will they eat?' 'The blood of whoever sleeps here,' said Paramugatti.

56

KOND

Kudelpada, Kalahandi District

At first Nirantali used to sweep her house with her own hair. One day she went to bathe and as she was washing her hair it all fell out. Nirantali was upset at this and wept, 'How am I to sweep my house now? It will be filthy and full of mess and dirt.' She was afraid too that white ants would eat her hair, so she wrapped it in a leaf and buried it. When she went home, she could not clean the house and it got dirtier and dirtier. She went to the place where she had bathed and there was growing a clump of reeds. She broke them and the white blossoms fell on her and turned into lice. She made the stalks into a broom and cleaned

the house. When she threw away the rubbish it became a swarm of hornets.

57

KUTTIA KOND

Birighati, Ganjam District

One day Nirantali thought, 'Men have a lot of hair on their heads; unless they itch they'll never clean it.' She decided to make things to bite and tickle the head.

From the place where she was born, Nirantali brought a pinch of dust. She called a Kond woman and put the dust in her hair and said to her, 'From today, you must clean your hair with mud and water and comb it well.' For the dust had become alive and the whole head was crawling with lice.

58

KUTTIA KOND

Borga, Ganjam District

The moon lives in the sky and eats only once a year. When she relieves herself, she shuts the door. When she shuts the door, the sky looks blue, for the door of her house is of iron. She washes herself afterwards and throws the water down to the earth; if it falls on anyone's head, it turns into lice.

59

PARENGA

Rupodai, Koraput District

Bhima Mahaprabhu had seven wives and he went to each every day. But when he went to his eldest wife, he did not make love to her, but just tumbled into bed and went to sleep. This continued for a long time and the eldest wife got more and more unhappy. One day she went to her mother Markarandi and told her all about it.

Markarandi said, 'At the time of your next period, take a little of the blood and mix it with millet bread. Break the bread

into little crumbs and scatter them over the bed and the floor under the bed.'

The girl went home, and when she next had her period, she took a little of the blood and mixed it with millet bread and broke it up into little crumbs and scattered them over the bed and the floor under the bed. When Bhima Mahaprabhu came to sleep that night, the crumbs turned into bugs and bit him all over. He could not sleep and soon began to make love to his wife.

60

HILL SAORA

Talasingi, Ganjam District

At the beginning of things, although other creatures got sick and died, fowls were free of disease; they were always strong and well, and only died if men killed them. As a result they greatly increased in numbers. Kittung thought, 'All other creatures die of disease, but these cocks and hens never get anything the matter with them.' He made two kinds of disease; one was called *āmān* and the other *jāloi*.[1] He scraped some dirt off his tongue and mixed this dirt and the diseases with paddy chaff and scattered it in the streets of the villages. The fowls ran to peck it up and at once fell ill. Then Kittung said to *jāloi*, 'Be born in their bellies and make them vomit, thus destroying their livers.' He said to *āmān*, 'Be born in their bellies and come out as lice and bite them all over and dry their blood.'

61

HILL SAORA

Okhra, Ganjam District

At first men had scanty hair and no lice. When their hair grew, they did not know how to comb or arrange it properly and they looked unkempt and ugly. Kittung wondered what to do. 'If I can get some small creature to irritate the scalp,

[1] *Amān* is a contracted form of the Saora word meaning 'blood': *jāloigar* is, in human beings, an inflammation of the bowels.

they'll clean and comb it and they'll look better.' He went to the sago palm, cut the wood, brought out the fibre, dried it, powdered it with a stone and tied it in a bundle. He went from village to village scattering the powder on people's heads. They thought this was one of Kittung's jokes and took no notice.

But fifteen days later, their heads began to itch and lice crawled everywhere. They ran to Kittung and asked him what was the matter. 'Scratching, scratching, we can't eat; scratching, scratching, we can't drink; scratching, scratching, we can't make love.' Kittung said, 'Go to a stream and wash your heads with clay, and come back.' They did so, and Kittung gave them some castor-oil. Kittung's wife gave them her own comb. In this way, they learnt to clean and dress their hair.

62

HILL SAORA

Abbasingi, Ganjam District

Saitano Saora lived in Rubasingi. He had two wives, but the elder had no children. The younger had two sons and a daughter. So Saitano loved the younger wife very much but he was always beating and abusing the elder. One day the poor woman got fever and died. When they performed her Guar ceremonies her ghost went to Kittung, and said, 'My husband always troubled me: now how can I trouble him?' Kittung picked up a handful of paddy chaff and put it on her head.

The chaff turned into bugs and Kittung said to them, 'Go and live in Saitano's cot and all night bite him and drink his blood. By day you can hide in the cot.'

Mosquitoes

63

BHATTRA

Deodhara, Koraput District

When field-work first began, Mahaprabhu himself used to smelt and fashion iron. He himself made every kind of implement.

The sparks used to fall on him and burn him, so he had to work with one hand and wipe himself with the other. The black smuts came off, flew into the air and turned into mosquitoes and when Mahaprabhu finished his work he found himself bitten by swarms of them. He caught them and put them into his bellows and took them home.

The mosquitoes were very hungry and asked Mahaprabhu for something to eat. Mahaprabhu said, 'Well, I'll let you go, but don't bite me.' They said, 'Well, we'll leave you alone and bite the rest of the village.' Mahaprabhu let them go and said, 'Go and live in the village, but don't bother people by day: at night you can do what you will.' The mosquitoes flew away to the village and have been there ever since.

64

GADABA

San Duralu, Koraput District

The goddess Usumdai always had to live in water, for her body was full of fire. One day Bhimo Mahaprabhu came to fish in the river where she was living. He thought Usumdai was a fish and he killed her with his mace and pulled her out of the water. The corpse at once began to burn of its own accord. When it was reduced to ashes, the ashes turned into mosquitoes and flew away. Some of the gods kept the mosquitoes as pets; others sent them to bite human beings and give them fever.

65

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

In a certain village there were two large dormitories, one for boys and one for girls. As the time for the Pus Parab Festival approached, the girls said to the boys, 'They are dancing in every village except ours. But you boys are so lazy that you can do nothing but sleep.' Night after night the girls went begging, cursing, persuading, but the boys were lazy and they invariably said they were too tired.

The girls were very annoyed and at last went to an old woman, who was famous for her magical powers. When she heard what was the matter, she got some millet chaff and gave it to the girls. 'Take this,' she said, 'and throw it over the boys' house.'

The girls took the chaff and that night when the boys again refused to come and dance, they threw it over the house. The chaff turned into a swarm of mosquitoes, which bit and bit the sleeping boys. They were soon awake, for the mosquitoes gave them no rest. There was nothing else to do, so they came out and joined the girls in their dance.

66

KUTTIA KOND

Turli, Ganjam District

Long ago, soon after the world was made, when men slept at night they had sound sweet sleep till morning. Nirantali saw this and thought it was not good. She decided to make mosquitoes. She went to the Suti Duki River and sent a crab to get her some mud. She dried it in the sun for three days. When it was dry she made the body of a mosquito; with the stem of a fine grass, she made legs, with wax she made eyes and added a little tail of wax. In the tail she put a thorn of the prickly pear and gave it thin flower petals for wings. But she put no blood in its body. The mosquito said, 'You've made me, but there's no blood in me.' Nirantali said, 'That is because you're going to feed on blood.' She sent it to live on the bodies of cattle and men.

67

PARENGA

Rupodai, Koraput District

Ispur Mahaprabhu was very fond of meat. He used to go out hunting every day, leaving his wife at home. One day he stayed out very late, for he found nothing and searched till he was completely exhausted. His wife got the supper ready and went outside to watch the road for him. She stood in the setting sun; it was

hot and the sweat flowed down her body. She wiped it away, and with it came the dirt of her day's toil. She rubbed the dirt into little balls and blew them away saying, 'Go and buzz in my lord's ears.'

The balls of dirt turned into mosquitoes. At last Ispur had found a deer and was about to shoot his arrow when the mosquitoes buzzed in his ears. He was so startled that he missed.

68

HILL SAORA

Okhra, Ganjam District

At night in the old days people were able to enjoy untroubled sleep. There was a Saora village where the people were always ill. For fear of this, ten households moved elsewhere and built a new village. Kumbup Saora was the new Chief. After a long time he arranged the marriage of his son and the boy took his wife elsewhere and they lived separately. A year later the husband quarrelled with his wife and beat her. That day she ate nothing and slept outside on the veranda. For three days she fasted and slept outside.

When the husband wearied of saying how sorry he was he went to Kittung and said. 'There was a little quarrel and she is sulking day after day.' Kittung wondered how to soothe the girl; he gave the boy a handful of chaff and said, 'Throw this over the place where she sleeps. Don't speak to her: go in and shut the door.' The boy did so. The chaff turned into a swarm of mosquitoes which settled all over the girl and bit, bit, bit till she hammered on the door, crying to be let in. 'Open the door, open quickly.' After making her wait a bit, the husband let her in and gave her a place in his bed. Since then mosquitoes have flown about and bitten people.

Scorpions

69

BHATTRA

Parsel, Koraput District

Somra Bhattra was the Chief of Katanguda village. He had three wives. But there were no children. Somra was always angry with his wives and used to quarrel with them. Presently the middle wife died and the elder and younger were with him. Then he married a new girl and she had two sons. Somra loved this girl very much and cared nothing for the older women.

One day the eldest wife fell ill and died and went to Mahaprabhu. She said, 'As I had nothing but annoyance with my husband, grant me a boon that now I can cause pain to others.' Mahaprabhu said, 'But who has troubled you?' She said, 'My husband used to beat and curse me; he gave me no food: in the cold weather he kept me outside the house.' Mahaprabhu said, 'Go; you will be born as a scorpion and as you stayed out in the cold weather, hide in the doorway at night and when anyone comes out, bite him. Their bodies will burn and they'll stay out all night weeping with pain.'

The scorpion did this and one day she fell on a boy's head and broke it open and he died. On the third day the scorpion bit the Chief himself and his wife and they walked to and fro crying with pain in the cold.

70

BHATTRA

Chitabera, Koraput District

A Bhattra and his wife lived on Kandadongar Hill. The Bhattra planted a fine garden of tobacco and after that he did nothing but smoke. Even when his wife called him for food, he would not come to eat it. One day his pipe burnt his mouth and in a fit of temper he threw it away. All night the burn in his mouth hurt him. Next day he went to find his pipe but during the night it had turned into a scorpion. The creature

went for him. The Bhattra was frightened and ran away. He said, 'Let no one touch this scorpion for it will bite like fire.' He drove it away to a cowdung pit and made it a hole to live in.

71

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu made ants, butterflies, grasshoppers but it was only to the snake that he said, 'You may bite animals and men.' The snake did what it could, but when they were bitten men took medicine and recovered. One evening when Mahaprabhu was walking on Samudra Hill he trod on the snake and got bitten, but he suffered nothing and went chuckling on his way. But when he got home he thought, 'I made this snake to trouble men, but they don't really suffer at all; I must make something that will really hurt and then they will be afraid of me.'

Next day Mahaprabhu went to the Pathari River which runs below Samudra Hill and caught a young crab. Down its backside as far as the belly he pushed a bit of the bark of an irritating shrub to make a sort of tail. He caught and killed five snakes and removed their fangs and poison. He put four in the crab's belly and one in the tail. Then he took it to a village and put it under a stone saying, 'If anyone sits here, bite him and it will really hurt, for the poison of five snakes is in you.'

But then Mahaprabhu was afraid that many people would die, so he called Seli Sisa and told him that he had created a scorpion. 'When it bites,' he said, 'take a root of thatching-grass, grind it up and smear it on the place and it will heal.'

72

DIDAYI

Amliwada, Koraput District

After the world had been made, the sow in whose bristles Rumrok had discovered earth had a litter of sucklings. But they were so many that the mother did not know how to feed them. So it went to Rumrok and asked him what to do. Rum-

rok said, 'Go from garden to garden and dig up the soil and eat what you can get.'

Now in those days the only way a pig could be killed was by a human being and Rumrok thought that there would be too many pigs in the world unless he arranged other ways for it to die. So he took some dirt from his ear and made it into a scorpion, telling it, 'I am going to put you under a stone. Live and breed there. If any pig disturbs you, sting it and it will die.' Soon afterwards one of the sucklings knocked against the stone and the scorpion stung it and it died.

But if a scorpion stings a human being, it is not fatal. And if anyone takes the dirt from his ear and sniffs at it, he will be eased of the pain.

73

KOND

Turiya, Koraput District

Sakat Kond lived with his wife in Kansaguda. He was a shaman, she a shamanin. They had five sons and seven daughters and married them all. One day the Kond quarrelled with his wife and she went off in a temper to her parents' house.

At the Chait Parab Festival Sakat had made patterns on the wall of his house. When the wife ran away Sakat scraped off some of the decorated mud and by his magic sent it after her to bring her home. It ran after her and turned into a scorpion on the way. Presently it overtook her and bit her and she ran weeping home to her husband. By his magic he took the poison of the scorpion out of her body and the burning pain ceased.

Sakat said to the scorpion, 'Go to the jungle and live in trees and under stones.' From this scorpion all the rest were born.

Spiders

74

BHATTRA

Parsel, Koraput District

In Salheputti village there lived a Ganda called Arjun. He had five sons and three daughters. He got them married, all but the youngest: when this boy too grew up he went to find a bride for him. He found a good girl in the house of the watchman of Baiyaguda. When the arrangements for the wedding were completed Arjun called his relatives and many Gandas came to the village. Arjun took some yarn in his right hand and wound it into a ball on his left. But the yarn slipped from his hand and fell on the bridegroom's foot. Directly it touched the foot, life came into it and it turned into a spider. The spider climbed up into the boy's wedding-crown. The wind carried it and its thread into a tree. The spider lived there and began to spin thread from its belly.

75

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu divided mankind into different castes, each with its own special work to do. That day there was a man who had gone to drink palm wine and did not return until everything was over. When he found all the others busy with their own work, he asked Mahaprabhu what he should do and what caste he was. Mahaprabhu said, 'You are to be a fisherman. Make your net and catch fish for a living.'

The man went home and spun a thread and tried to make a net with it. He tried and tried but he was no good at it. He said to Mahaprabhu, 'I don't know how to make a net, so how can I catch fish?' Mahaprabhu said, 'I'll send someone to teach you,' and the fisherman went home.

Mahaprabhu made a spider and its wife and placed thread in their bellies and told them, 'Even if you go seven times round

the world, this thread will not be exhausted. Go to that fisherman and show him how to make a net.'

The spiders went to the fisherman's house and wove their webs across the door and over the rafters. The fisherman watched them and learnt how to make his nets.

76

DIDAYI

Burjoguda, Koraput District

In Andiwada there lived a Sisa priest who had no child. He had grown old worshipping the gods. But against all expectation his wife conceived and in due time a girl child was born.

The priest went to get medicines for the mother and child. He picked many kinds of leaf and root, but on the way home he saw a plant which seemed to him to be the most valuable of all. He dug up the root and cut off the two ends and threw them away, preserving only the middle portion. The lower part of the root turned into a spider.

The spider at once started to spin thread out of its belly and made a web in which it caught the priest. The old man struggled but could not escape. He said to himself, 'If this medicine can produce such a dangerous creature I had better not take it back to my wife', and he threw the rest of the root away.

The priest said to the spider, 'Why do you bother about an old man like me? Why not go to the Chief's house where you will find many enemies more worthy of you. Fight them and kill them but let me go.'

The spider thought this advice was good, and it released the priest and made its way to the Chief's house. This house was crammed full of rats which attacked the spider, but it was stronger than they and caught them all in its web and killed them.

Since then spiders have lived in houses, but they are weaker now and do not fight with anything bigger than flies.

77

GADABA

Rajuput, Koraput District

When the Middle World was first made, men and women lived stark naked. Ispur Mahaprabhu saw this and said, 'They live naked as pigs and look like pigs; they ought to have some clothes.' He went to his wife Pilordai and said to her, 'How can we give men clothes?' She replied, 'I don't know, but I have an elder sister. Her name is Chorukilup and she lives on Nandkhuti Hill. Go to her and ask her what to do.'

Ispur Mahaprabhu went to Nandkhuti Hill, but when he arrived he found Chorukilup asleep. He threw some water over her and she started up annoyed. She said, 'Neither today nor yesterday has anyone dared to wake me up. Who are you?' 'I am Mahaprabhu,' he replied. 'Well, you've never been here before. What do you want now?' asked the old woman. 'I want to learn how to make clothes for men,' said Ispur Mahaprabhu, 'and my wife thought you might know what to do.'

'I too cannot advise you,' said Chorukilup. 'But I have a daughter. Her name is Pitmalidai and she lives on Tingapan Hill. Go to her and I am sure she will be able to tell you what to do.'

When Ispur Mahaprabhu reached Tingapan Hill, the girl was cleaning her hair with a comb. Ispur went and stood behind her. When she saw his shadow she cried, 'Who are you? Stand in front of me or I will devour you.' Ispur came forward and stood in front of her. 'Who are you?' she said. 'And what do you want?' 'I am Mahaprabhu and I want to know how to make clothes for men.'

The girl said nothing, but she pulled some of her hairs out of her comb, rolled them into a ball and threw it down in front of Ispur. It turned into a spider. She said, 'Take this little creature home and watch how it makes its web. From it you will learn how to make cloth.'

78

GADABA

Gelaguda, Koraput District

A Gadaba and his wife lived in Rifliguda. They were very old. One day they went to cut a clearing on Kosuldongar. There was a clump of bamboos; they cut it and were digging up the roots. On this hill Bodra Guru offered a cock in sacrifice and, after eating it, buried the crest under the bamboos. From this a spider was born. The spider came out when the old Gadaba and his wife cut the bamboos and wound them up in his thread and made them fall to the ground. The old people wept and said, 'Don't trouble us: whatever blessing you want, tell us and we'll give it to you.' The spider said, 'You've ruined my house. Where can I live now? Show me where I can go.' The Gadaba took it home and said, 'Make a home here with your own thread.' It made its nets and caught mosquitoes and flies.

79

KOND

Palki, Kalahandi District

Many flies and mosquitoes used to fly round Nirantali's house and bite her; she had nothing to catch them with. One day she went to bathe and one of her pubic hairs fell from her body. She saw it and felt very sad. 'If I throw it into the water a fish will eat it, if I throw it anywhere else a witch may get it.' In the end she took it home and hid it in the roof. It turned into a spider; it made a net and caught the flies and mosquitoes and ate them.

80

KOND

Charcharganna, Ganjam District

Jaonra Pinnu once got a very bad cough and brought up phlegm from his chest. He picked up the mess and said to it. 'Become a spider and go to Nirantali and help her.' As he spoke,

it turned into a strange creature with nine legs. At that time Nirantali and Bindrabari the blacksmith were engaged in making the clouds and the spider went to help string them in the sky. Nirantali said, 'Go and see the four quarters of the world and tell us what is good and what is bad.'

The spider climbed up, spun a thread from its belly and swung round the world: it saw east, west and north. But when it wanted to go to the south, it ran out of thread. Nirantali said, 'Very well, stay where you are and make your thread.'

81

SAORA

Padanpalli, Sambalpur District

In Havrangpur there was a famous Chief. He had five sons and two daughters. They were married in due course; then after a long time the eldest son died and after him each son in turn. The Chief's wife too died. The Chief was now left alone and lived sad and lonely. He became an ascetic and wandered solitary in the jungle. So twelve years passed.

One day he came to Kansapali; near the village was a great jungle. He lived in this jungle for a long time. He had a gourd in which he used to keep his water. One day when he was cleaning it, two seeds fell with the water to the ground. Later in the rains a gourd-vine grew up from one seed and a spider from the other. When the vine grew, a tendril came into the hut and twined itself round the door.

One day the ascetic lost his temper and broke down the tree and from the root the spider came out and closed the ascetic's door with its web. It did this daily and daily the ascetic had to clear it away. He tried to stop the spider but it took no notice of him. At last he said, 'Go where you will and take this web for your home but, whatever you do, don't make it in my house.'

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

FROGS AND FISHES

Frogs

1

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

Before frogs were made there was no rain. There were many Didayis in a place called Memerpada and the Chief was a very wealthy person with no fewer than twenty-one buffaloes in his sheds. Every buffalo gave abundant milk, so much that it took two men all the morning till midday to milk them. Every morning their urine used to flow out of the shed like a river.

One day while the eldest buffalo was being milked, there fell from its mouth a ball of half-chewed grass and went plop into the stream of urine. Suddenly it started to jump about and cry '*Auink-auink*'. It was a frog and when the rain heard its cry it began to fall.

2

GADABA

San Duralu, Koraput District

There was a god called Girgirimeta; his wife's name was Tumaldai; and they had a daughter named Sonki. When Sonki grew up, her parents kept a boy in the house to serve for her. His name was Kindrijhaliya. One day Girgirimeta said to the boy, 'Down by the river there is a *pyasa* tree. Cut it down and we'll use the wood for a door.' The boy went down to the river. As he cut the tree, the little chips of wood flew off and fell into the water, where they turned into frogs.

After a time the boy got thirsty and went down to the river to get some water. When the frogs saw him they began to jump about, just like chips of wood jumping from a tree. The boy was frightened and ran home to tell his wife. They told the

parents. Girgirimeta went down to the river and saw the frogs for himself. He came home and said to the boy, 'You'd better not cut any more of that tree. If even the chips of wood can jump about like that, I don't know what might not happen if the entire tree fell into the river.'

3

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

There was a fine tamarind tree on the bank of a lake. Beneath it a group of village boys used to play a game with sticks and little bits of wood. They hit the bits of wood to and fro, making them jump in the air.

An old woman lived in that village. She had seven granddaughters—Saridenga, Khuridenga, Ujjedenga, Rasdenga, Sukridenga, Kiludenga and Pandridenga.

One day the girls went to bathe in the lake. When the boys saw them, they came and threw dust and water over them, and laughed when they cried. They followed them about and made it impossible for them to bathe. When the old grandmother heard about it, she was very angry; she came along in a rage and threw dust at the boys. The dust went into their eyes, and as they were rubbing themselves and trying to see, the old woman threw their sticks and bits of wood into the lake and took the girls home.

When the boys recovered they looked for their things, but they found that the little bits of wood had turned into frogs and were hopping about in the water.

4

GADABA

Surgunnaput, Koraput District

In the days when there was no rain, there were no frogs either. Jalkamni Deota was the daughter of Indro Mahaprabhu. At the time of her first menstruation, so much blood flowed from her that she went to sit on the bank of a river. It was a whole year before the blood dried and she was able to wash her clothes.

On the day she bathed, as she was returning from the river, Mardi Deota saw her. He desired her and following her to a lonely place forced his will upon her. She conceived and her belly swelled. She was ashamed, for she had no husband, and for shame she went into the river and lived there. 'No one must see me,' she said, 'or they'll laugh at me.' When her time came, she gave birth to many frogs. She left them in the river and went to Indro Mahaprabhu. After a while the water in the river dried up and the frogs began to cry for their mother. They cried, '*Ma-ma keo-keo,*' meaning, 'Mother, where have you gone?'

When Indro Mahaprabhu heard them, he asked Jalkamni who they were. She was ashamed and said, 'I do not know.' But he said, 'I know all about this. You have done a great sin. You must go back to your children.' She said, 'But where can I go? The water is dried up and there is no home for us.'

So Indro Mahaprabhu sent heavy rain and the streams and rivers were filled with water, and the frogs had a place to live.

5

GADABA

Aonripada, Koraput District

Doriya Bondo, who lived at Anjam, had a wife who was a very clever witch. One day she fell ill and knew that she was going to die. She called Doriya and said to him, 'In my belly is a bladder; it goes *pat-pat-pat* all the time and in it is all my witch-wisdom. When you burn my body, the flesh and bones will be destroyed, but the bladder will remain. On the third day search for it among the ashes and when you have found it take it down to the river and throw it into the water. My sister will be born from it and she will stay with you as your Rani for two-and-a-half hours.'

The woman died and on the third day Doriya went, according to custom, to examine the ashes. He found the bladder unconsumed by the flames and carried it down secretly to the nearest stream and threw it into the water. When he threw it in, ten male and eleven female frogs were born from it. One of the female frogs turned into a beautiful young girl; her head was

shaven and the cloth hung low over her buttocks; about her ample breasts hung a great mass of beads and ornaments.[1] She made love to the old man for two-and-a-half hours; in that time he was the Maharaja and she his Rani, but when the period was over she turned back into a frog and jumped into the stream.

On the next Dassara day the old man Doriya took the other villagers down to the stream and told them what had happened. But he never saw the girl again, though the world now is full of frogs.

6

KOYA

Sikpalli, Koraput District

There were twelve Koya brothers living in a village, and they all had wives. But the wives quarrelled with each other so much that they decided to separate. The eldest called the others and they discussed how to divide the land and the forest. Then each went with his wife to his hill to cut the trees. They worked all morning and returned home at midday.

One day the youngest brother's wife brought roots from his hill and cooked them. She made a dish of boiled millet. But she was slow and went out late. When she came to a stream, she put the leaf-cup of food on the bank and bathed. At that moment Deur, who was wandering over the hills, came to the place and accidentally trod on the leaf-cup. When he saw what he had done and realized he had spoilt the food, he made it into a frog—the roots were its legs, the millet its eggs. He picked it up and put it into the stream.

The woman wept, 'My husband will beat me.' So Deur took the girl to his house and gave her food to take to her husband.

In this way the frog-caste began.

[1] She was dressed in fact just like a Bondo girl.

7

KOND

Haripur, Ganjam District

Engrada and Bataroli used to live on the mountain called Tikawali Soru. They had three boys and two girls and when the boys grew up Engrada went to find wives for them. He got two girls but there was no one for the third boy. He married the eldest and youngest boys. Then the youngest girl was taken to Janjhipada by a Kond for his son. Now the elder daughter was unmarried and the middle boy was unmarried. That year there was a great crop of mangoes. Those who were married went for them, ate the fruit and put the kernels out to dry.

When they were ready the elder girl put the dry kernels in water and took them to the Sori-anu River to wash them. Half the kernels floated away and the girl jumped into the water for them. But she could not get them and in a temper, she said, 'Turn into frogs and live in this river.'

They became frogs and began to swim about.

8

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

At the beginning, the farmers cultivated for five years and did well. But in the sixth year no rain fell: the seed lay useless in the fields and men began to starve. Nirantali tried hard to bring rain but could not.

At last in despair she went to Gunjianu River and fetched some green slime. She made a frog of clay and covered it with the slime. The clay frog turned into an egg. In the month of June the egg broke open and in July a living frog came out and went to Nirantali saying to her, 'Why have you made me? What am I to do ?' Nirantali said, 'There's no rain, so weep loudly.' The frog wept loudly and its cry went up to Birmenja. He felt sorry and sent rain.

Nirantali put the frog in the river and told it to live there.

9

KUTTIA KOND

Mundimaska, Ganjam District

One day a man made a trap for fish and went to a river: all day the fish swam up and down. One day a big toad got into the trap. When the man came to kill it, he was frightened by its ugliness and ran away, and the toad chased him. The man climbed a tree, the toad came after him; the man jumped down and ran for his life. The toad followed hard after him. He climbed another tree, then went up one of the roots of a banyan. But now when the toad tried to follow, the wood was too smooth and it slipped down. Two or three times it fell and at last was killed by the fall. A drop of its blood fell on the man's leg and became a 'scorpion-sore'.

Ever since if any of the toad's water falls on a man, he gets a sore.

10

PARENGA

Rupodai, Koraput District

Bhima Raja had a tank made. There was no water in it, though it was very deep and Bhima Raja was greatly disappointed. Megh Raja had seven daughters, of whom the youngest was Jalkamni. One day the girls went to bathe. They found a banyan tree on the bank and put their clothes under it. The youngest girl went down naked into the dry tank. As she went it filled with water. The girls bathed and came out and dressed, but as they were dressing the bank broke and the water flowed out. When Bhima Raja saw the mud and the broken bank next day, he wondered what had happened. He mended the bank and again the girls came and broke it. This went on day after day for a long time.

One day Bhima Raja hid in the tree. When the seven sisters went to bathe, he realized what was happening, and thought, 'If I sacrifice this youngest girl, the water will always remain.' Next day when the seven sisters came, Jalkamni was

the last to take off her clothes. She threw them into the branches of the tree but they fell to the ground and Bhima Raja stole them and hid them. Then when the girls came to dress, and Jalkamni was searching for her clothes, Bhima Raja caught her. The others ran away.

But when Bhima Raja was going to sacrifice her, he was so enchanted with her beauty that he took her home instead. He wanted to marry her but she refused, for she feared that from the marriage there would be no profit to the world. To avoid Bhima Raja, she began to flirt with one of the men in the palace and Bhima Raja was very angry and decided to kill her. She said, 'Don't kill me here: take me to the tank and kill and bury me there.' Bhima Raja accordingly made a pit in the tank and cut the girl's throat above it. Her blood turned into water and her bones into frogs. Since then Jalkamni has lived in the world and rain has fallen.[1]

II

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

Sukru Saora had five sons and married them all to girls of other villages. When he had done this, he died. His sons carried his body to Kolharra Kachhar and burnt it there on a great pyre of green *karanji* wood. The following day they performed the proper ceremonies and buried the ashes and bones.[2] That year there was heavy rain and the ashes settled and the pit was filled with water. Presently two frogs were born from the bones. That night Sukru came to his wife in a dream and said, 'I have been born again on earth and I desire to see you.' In the morning the woman rose early and went to the place of the dead, and there were two frogs in the pit. Seeing them she wept and said, 'You have been born in water; so from two your tribe will increase to twenty-one and you will be called Kinnadan.'

[1] The offering of a human sacrifice to cause water to flow in a dry tank has been recorded in many parts of India. See my *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal*, pp. 440 ff.; *J.B.O.R.S.*, Vol. XII, p. 155; *North Indian Notes and Queries*, Vol. V, p. 209.

[2] At a Saora funeral green *karanji* wood should be used for the pyre, and the calcined bones and ashes are ceremonially buried in a pit near by.

The frogs mated and from them came twenty-one. So it has always been, and they are called Kinnadan [water-tigers].

12

HILL SAORA

Liabo, Ganjam District

An old snake laid seven eggs in a stream. From them were born seven kinds of living creatures. The old snake told one to be a fish, another a frog, the others a snake, a lizard, a cricket, a chameleon, a monitor. It said to the frog, 'You were born of the first egg: live in a river. It told the cricket to live in the jungle. It told the frog to give warning of the rains. Kittung said, 'When they hear you weep, they will know the rains are coming.'

Now the frog and the cricket are great friends: in the hot weather, the cricket looks for the frog and they talk together. If the frog goes to a well, it makes the water clean.

13

HILL SAORA

Dantara, Ganjam District

One year after the rains, all the water dried up and the people were in distress. Kittung saw their misery and felt sad for them; he tried to make something in which they could keep water. He dug a pit but the water soon sank into the ground.

In those days, men had three eyes. Kittung got hold of a man, took out his third eye, cut it in half and put the bits in his cheeks. For seven days he ate no food. Presently life came into the bits of eye in his cheeks and they turned into frogs and jumped about in his mouth.

Kittung opened his mouth and let the frogs hop out and said, 'You will be Raja and Rani of the water and you will always guard the water for mankind.'

This is how frogs were made.

14

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

Jammasum pulled the skin off a goat's testes and holding them in his hand, thought, 'What shall I make of this?' He made hands and feet of wood and stuck them in and said, 'Go and live in water and when it is going to rain cry *meh-meh* like a goat so that people will know what is going to happen.'

15

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

Kittung was offering sacrifice in the sky. He offered a goat and cut up the flesh: the organ remained. He thought, 'No one will eat this; I'll cook it on the river-bank.' He took it to a river and cleaned it in the water. A big fish snapped at it and swallowed it. Kittung said, 'I brought this to get a tasty morsel for myself and now you've stolen it, so you'll never be able to digest it. When you excrete, it will come out as it is.'

And in fact when it came out it was a frog and lived in the water. When the rains approach, it weeps and its weeping means that the rains will be good.

16

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

There was a lovely girl, whose body was tender as fresh leaves. Her name was Dasun. One day she went to bathe and afterwards sat on a stone to comb her hair. The demon Gadejangsum[1] came by and was filled with desire for her. She tried to escape, but he threw her down and forced her.

[1] *Gadel* means 'to create' and *jangam* suggests the life-giving seed. In this story, Gadejangsum creates a child in Dasun's belly.

In due time Dasun found herself pregnant and her belly began to swell. For shame she hid herself under the water. From her belly innumerable baby frogs were born crying '*Yang-yang*'. Dasun was frightened and went down the river to the great ocean, but her children followed her crying '*Yang-yang*'. In despair she went to Kittung, but he said, 'Don't be afraid. It is a good thing you have had these children. They will be very useful to men, for when they cry "*Yang-yang*" I will send rain on the earth.'[1]

Fishes

17

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

Once long ago, Mahaprabhu took the form of an ascetic and wandered on earth for seven days. When he had seen everything he returned home. On the way he passed a village where a fine guava tree was growing. The people had gathered under it and were picking and eating the fruit. Mahaprabhu too went there and asked for some. They gave him seven guavas and he took them and went his way. He came to a stream and bathed. He felt hungry and ate the guavas. He ate six of them and half the seventh, but could not finish the last half. He threw it into the stream and said, 'Become a fish and eat all the dirty things in the water. Your eggs will be like the seeds of the guava and every egg will produce a fish.' From the bit of fruit came the *kotri* fish and from its eggs all the other kinds of fish.

18

BINJHWAR

Tumibandh, Sambalpur District

A Gond and his wife lived in a certain village. They had no parents, there was only this husband and his wife. She was always quarrelling with him and when he was away she quarrelled

[1] For other stories about frogs, see ch. XVI, 7, 15, 35; ch. XIX, 7; ch. XX, 50; and ch. XXVII, 3.

with the neighbours instead. She could not live without quarrelling and her husband naturally felt very miserable.

One day he went to another village to visit some of his relatives. On the fourth day he came back. His wife had gone to bathe and he met her on the way. She began to quarrel at once. 'Why were you away so long?' she screamed. He did not answer but went home. His wife followed and gave him his supper.

Two months later the wife prepared to go to her own home. The husband went with her, but on the way she started quarrelling again. They came to a river and she cooked supper. She gave her husband his food and quarrelled again. The husband lost his temper at last: he knocked her down, cut off her tongue and threw it into the river. It sank to the bottom and turned into a fish.

This is why fishes attack anything they find.

19

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu made a tank, but the water in it was foul, for children and animals used to relieve themselves in it and the water stank.

One day Mahaprabhu wanted to inspect his tank but the smell was so bad he could not approach it. 'Whatever can I do ?' he thought.

He removed the thread and necklace round his throat and took them to a big stream and threw them in, whereupon the thread become fish and stay in the water.' When the snake saw Mahaprabhu told them to clean the river and tank and live in the water. They cleared everything up and when it had finished the snake went to the bank.

When Mahaprabhu saw the snake he said, 'This creature doesn't like living in the river, so I'll cut it up and the bits will become fish and stay in the water.' When the snake saw Mahaprabhu, it plunged into the water, but Mahaprabhu caught it and cut off its tail and this became an eel and the middle part became the tiny *saldar* and its belly became a *gurunga* fish and

its throat got out of the river and remained as a snake.

The fishes and crabs ate all the dirt and so cleaned the water everywhere.

20

GADABA

Chikanput, Koraput District

On Kanseri Hill lived a Bondo and his wife. They had no children. They tried every means to get them but failed. At last they died childless. The woman went to Mahaprabhu and said, 'I was born as a human being on earth, but I had no children.' Mahaprabhu said, 'What do you desire now? Ask.' The woman said, 'Give me the boon that my descendants will fill the whole earth.' Mahaprabhu said, 'Go and be reborn in water and your children will fill the earth, so many that you yourself will not recognize them.' So Mahaprabhu sent her to Karnilsagar to be born there as a fish. At first she lived alone. After a year she began to have children and they spread everywhere until they filled the whole earth.

21

KAMAR

Bhaira, (Khariar), Kalahandi District

In the Kamarides ruled a Raja. He was wealthy but he did not find happiness, for his Rani did not bear him a child and so he did not love her. One day he abused her so violently that she ran away in a temper.

On her way the Rani came to a river. There was a Kewat there who earned his living by taking people across in his little boat. The Rani said to him, 'Take me over.' He let her sit in the boat and began to row across. When they were in mid-stream the Raja arrived on the bank and shouted to the Kewat to bring his wife back. But the Kewat took no notice, and the Raja picked up a stone and threw it at him. The stone made a hole in the bottom of the boat and the Rani fell into the water. The Kewat swam to shore but the Rani was swallowed by a great fish.

The Raja seized the Kewat and said, 'Rescue my wife or I will kill you.' Now the Kewat had twelve brothers and they brought their nets and searched everywhere for the fish that had swallowed the Rani. In this way fishing began.

22

KOND

Amblibuwa, Koraput District

Bura Pinnu and Samda Pinnu created all creatures with the help of Dakpanji and his wife. When everything was ready Bura Pinnu and Samda Pinnu went into the sky.

After twelve years Samda Pinnu went to her parents' house. In those days there was no rain. Samda Pinnu stayed a month in her parents' house and one day Bura Pinnu had a dream that he was lying with his wife. Seed passed from him and wet his cloth. He thought, 'Where shall I throw this?' He decided to use it to make fish. He created the rain and in the rain he washed his cloth and made fish from the seed and scattered them everywhere. Men soon began to catch and eat them.

23

PARENGA

Rupodai, Koraput District

Birkam Mahaprabhu had a daughter called Kardidai. In the month of August the boys and girls of the village went to the forest for bamboo shoots. On that day Birkam Mahaprabhu went to sit in the house of the barber. The barber did not know who he was, and gave him bamboo shoots to eat. The god liked them and asked what they were. He went home and next day sent his daughter with the other girls to get shoots for him. Kardidai filled her basket with the shoots, but on the way home, as she was crossing a stream, she dropped them in the water and they turned into fish.

24

HILL SAORA

Baijalo, Ganjam District

Sankayat Saora made a big tank at Banjulguda, but the water was always foul with the worms and insects that infested it. One day Sankayat was sitting on the bank thinking how to get the water clean, when Kittung came by. 'Why are you thinking so hard?' he asked the Saora. When Sankayat told him, Kittung gave him a bit of wood and said, 'Cut this up into small pieces. Put them into a new pot, boil it on the fire and cover it with a new cloth. In the darkness before dawn make your wife naked as a cow and let her carry the pot to the tank and throw it in. The bits of wood will turn into things called fish and they will clean the water.'

Sankayat did as Kittung advised and the water of the tank became fresh and pure. During the rains, one side of the embankment broke; when the water flowed out, many of the fish escaped and spread through the world.

25

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

In the days when there were no fish, Kittung lived with his wife in the forest. One day they went together to dig for roots, but failed to get any. But at last, after a long while, they found a small date palm and dug up the roots which the wife put in her basket. They turned their steps homeward, the woman going ahead, Kittung behind. Presently they came to a river. As they were crossing it, a frog jumped with a plop into the water and startled Kittung; his foot slipped and he fell against his wife knocking the basket into the water. The roots floated away and turned into fish.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

REPTILES

CHAMELEONS

1

GOND

Chacharaguda, Koraput District

In Junjhiguda village were ten households of Sundis and one household of Paiks. The Paik had two daughters and one son. The elder girl was married but had not gone to her father-in-law's house. Instead she did the act of love with a Sundi boy. Her parents tried to send her away, but she took no notice of anyone and refused to go. Her husband came often to fetch her, but she used to hide.

Her husband was very angry and got some poison to kill her. He went to her house, ate his dinner, drank his liquor and went to sleep ; late at night he got up and put poison in the pot where they were setting curd.

But the Paik's Thakurani gave him a dream saying, 'Let no one eat the curd ; an insect has fallen in and ruined it.' Thakurani turned the poison into a chameleon, making it look ugly as poison. In the morning the Paik remembered his dream and looked at the curd and found the chameleon.

2

KOYA

Sikpalli, Koraput District

There was a Chief whose name was Mangla. He had a son and daughter. The girl grew up, married and went to live in her father-in-law's house. In time she gave birth to a son and when he heard of it, her brother went to see her. He stayed with her for a long time. The girl's husband's young sister was unmarried. She thought, 'Why not marry this girl to my brother?'

So she told her brother to flirt and play with her. He did so and they fell in love with each other.

One day when the others were in the field and the two young people were alone in the house, the boy wanted to run away with the girl. But she stopped him and dragged him back to the house. There they were flirting together. The boy had a large ring in his ear; it had a pendant with a glass tip. The girl asked for it; the boy refused to give it to her, so she caught hold of him and pulled it off and it fell to the ground. There it turned into a chameleon and ran round and round in front of them. The boy and girl were frightened and now they really did run away together.

Crocodiles

3

BHATTRA

Chitabera, Koraput District

When the crocodile first appeared its skin was very smooth and beautiful. It lived in water, but could not get enough to eat; its children were born in the water: they too had no food.

On the bank of this river was Budra Manjhi's field and at harvest time many labourers went to reap it. At midday they tied up their sheaves and two of the girls went for water. The crocodile tried to catch them. The girls ran away screaming. The men heard the girls and ran to the place and struck at the crocodile with their sickles until its whole body was covered with wounds and its beautiful skin became rough and scaly as it is today.[1]

4

BHUIYA

Ronta, (Bonai), Sundargarh District

A great crocodile lived in a river. Whenever travellers came to cross, it would carry them over but it used to eat one of them as wages.

[1] The common Indian crocodile, but not the garial, is found in the Kolab, Machkund and Indravati Rivers.

One day Bhimsen came to the river and wanted to cross. The crocodile said, 'You are alone so I will have to eat you as my wages for taking you over.' Bhimsen had a lot of grain which he had borrowed from a moneylender and he said, 'At least take my grain across. You can eat me afterwards.' The crocodile carried the grain over, then it returned and put Bhimsen into its belly.

But Bhimsen had a knife and he cut the crocodile's liver and stomach into pieces. The crocodile in great pain cried, 'Don't do that again. I will let you out.' It tried to expel Bhimsen with its excreta, but the way was too narrow. Then it vomited and out he came. But as he came Bhimsen pulled out the crocodile's tongue, and since that day it has lived without one.[1]

5

BONDO

Dumiripada, Koraput District

A Bondo woman used to fetch water from the Machkund River. It was a long climb down from the village to the stream: she worked all day, but could never get enough. At last she got so weary that she jumped into the water and turned into a crocodile. You can still see the marks of the water-pot on the crocodile's head. When he saw what had happened, the husband also jumped into the river and he too became a crocodile.

6

DIDAYI

Amliwada, Koraput District

Konds and Didayis lived together in a village, of which the Chief was himself a Didayi. He had a married son and daughter, but the daughter had gone to a distant village with her husband and presently his son and his wife both died. Many of the other

[1] The motif of the crocodile who ferries people over a river and takes one of them as its wages is widely distributed. See MMI, p. 170; *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal,* p. 78.

Didayis also died and finally the survivors decided to abandon the place. But the Chief was old now and he refused to go and stayed on alone until he too died.

As the Didayis had all gone away, it was left to the Konds to dispose of the corpse and they were not prepared to take much trouble over it. They carried it on a cot to the nearest river and threw cot and corpse together into the water. The corpse sank to the bottom but the cot drifted down the stream.

Rumrok was bathing not far away and when he saw the cot he caught hold of it, thinking it might be useful. But directly he touched it, it turned into a crocodile and attacked him. Rumrok said, 'You may feed on all the creatures that live in water, but leave me alone.'

7

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

A certain man had a wife who gave birth to a child every month, twelve every year. In this way the family soon got very large. The parents were poor and did not know how to feed all their children. It was made worse by the fact that the mother could not do any work, for she was always either expecting or nursing a new baby. The husband had to do everything. He used to go every day to the jungle to dig roots. He used to eat his share before returning home, the children ate the rest and the poor mother got nothing.

One day the man beat his wife. 'You do no work,' he cried. 'I have to go every day for roots and never get a holiday.' And he went off to the jungle in a temper.

The woman too was angry. She swallowed all her children and left the house. As she went along, she came to the banks of a great river which was in flood, and in her despair she jumped into the rushing water. The children came out of her belly and turned into frogs. The mother turned into a crocodile.

8

JHORIA

Sukku, Koraput District

Ispur Mahaprabhu and his wife came to visit the Middle World and when they reached the Kolab River they found it in flood. They asked some villagers to take them across but no one was willing to do so. These villagers had just sacrificed a buffalo to their gods, and they offered Mahaprabhu the skin to serve as a boat. Mahaprabhu and his wife crossed over safely, and they were so pleased with the skin that they threw it back into the river saying, 'Go and be king of the waters.' It turned into a crocodile.

9

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

Ispur Mahaprabhu summoned all men to his council, for he had decided to divide them up into clans. There were two brothers who went ahead of the others. They came to a great river, whose waters were swollen by floods. The elder brother tried to cross, but the current was too strong for him and he came back to the bank. Then the younger brother tried but when he got half-way across he was carried away by the stream and was drowned. The older brother did not realize what had happened at first; he waited for a long time, but when there was no sign of his brother he returned towards his home. He met many people going to Ispur's council and they asked him why he was going back. He said that it was no use going on, for the flooded river had blocked the way. But they persuaded him to go with them, saying that they would all cross together.

When they came to the river, they saw the corpse of the drowned man floating in the water. They were frightened at this and did not dare to cross. But the corpse called to them, 'Don't be afraid. I will take you over one by one. But I shall eat the last man to go across.' They said, 'Well, but don't eat anybody now. You can have one of us on our way back.'

The corpse agreed and took them over one by one.

But when it came to the elder brother's turn, he said, 'I am not going. There are only two of us in the family. This, my younger brother, is dead. If I also drown in this river, who will eat the produce of my field and garden?' And he went home.

The others went to Mahaprabhu who asked where the two brothers were. When they told him, he said 'The brother who was drowned has become a crocodile. His elder brother's clan will therefore be Kalpadiya, the clan of one who has fallen into disaster. The crocodile will have the right to eat any men or animals that it can catch.'

10

KAMAR

Patarpunji, (Khariar), Kalahandi District

Formerly human beings were very stupid. At that time the gods used to go about the world just like men. One day Mahadeo was going somewhere. He came to a river; it was broad and deep and there was a ferryman. Mahadeo said, 'O ferryman, take me across the river.' The ferryman said, 'Give me my wages first and then I'll take you over.' Mahadeo did not like this and began to argue. Soon they were shouting at each other and at last Mahadeo fairly lost his temper and caught the ferryman's tongue and pulled it out.

The ferryman died and Mahadeo threw his corpse into the river and told it to become a crocodile. This is why the crocodile has no tongue.

11

KOYA

Tamsa, Koraput District

In Mainuguda were two Kewat brothers, Burju and Surju. Neither was married. They used to work as farm-hands in other people's houses: this gave them a lot of trouble. One day they decided it was no good. 'Let us trade instead,' they said.

Next day, the two brothers cut a *kumbi* tree and made a boat.

They took it to Sarjil River and fished. In that river was a spirit and they said, 'If you give us a lot of fish, all we want, and we get a lot of money, we'll sacrifice a human being to you.' The spirit was pleased and sent them many great fish and they became rich. They married. They forgot all about the sacrifice.

For six months the god waited, but when he saw they had forgotten he was angry and when next the brothers went fishing, he pulled their boat under the water. The brothers tried to swim ashore but the god turned the boat into a crocodile and it chased them. It caught the elder brother but the younger escaped and went home to tell the story. 'We made a boat of *kumbi* wood and it became a *kumbir* [crocodile],' they said.[1]

12

KOND

Bondri, Koraput District

When the world sank below the water, Darni Pinnu and Soru Pinnu went into a hollow *kumbi* tree and floated about till the new world was made. When husband and wife came out, the tree broke into two pieces. Afterwards Darni Pinnu and Soru Pinnu had children and arranged their marriages.

Darni Pinnu made her eldest son Raja and told him to live on the far side of a great tank. But the boy could not find any way to cross the tank and the two parents thought, 'Let us turn the two bits of *kumbi* into crocodiles.' This they did and the crocodiles took the Raja across the tank and he promised that if they ferried people over they should have men to eat. The Raja put four elephants' load of goods on the back of the crocodile and the she-crocodile took the Raja and his Diwan over. But then the crocodiles demanded their pay and the Raja took his gun and the crocodiles jumped into the water. In this way crocodiles began. Even now they get their wages when they can.

[1] The *kumbi* tree is the *Careya arborea,* Roxb., the wood of which is specially durable under water. *Kumbir,* for crocodile, is an Oriya word which has passed into the tribal languages: in Kui, for example, a crocodile is *kumberi* or *kimber*; in Saora, it is *kimāran.*

13

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

In the old days when there was no water, Sona-keota and Kiu-keota were born in Saphaganna and water was born with them. They made the water into a river and tried to take it to the Telenga Sea. But at Gerawali in Lankagarh Mutta (which is also called Dharamduar) the gods stopped the river and prevented it going further.

Sona-keota and Kiu-keota said to the gods, 'We are doing a good work, to give water to thirsty people: tell us what sacrifice you want to let the water flow.' The gods said, 'We want parched rice and a pig.' They said, 'We're ready to give it to you, but how are we to take the water over this great embankment you've made?' The gods said, 'We'll give you two tigers. Tie them to a plough and wherever you take them the water will follow.'

Sona-keota and Kiu-keota yoked the tigers to a plough and drove it along: the water followed; if ever it stopped they threw into it parched rice which turned into fish.

Slowly they went on to the Telenga Sea where they threw more rice and sacrificed a sow. They cut off its organ and threw it into the water. They also threw the goad with which they had driven the tigers and the plough. The organ became a crocodile, the stick a little fish, the plough a big fish.

That is why the crocodile is black as a roasted pig and makes a noise like a pig.

14

KUTTIA KOND

Birighati, Ganjam District

Nirantali cut a date palm which was growing in Saphaganna. She cut off the top and the roots and with the main trunk proceeded to make a crocodile. She made its legs of wood and its head of earth. Then she put life into it. She took it to Gumma Tank and let it go. There it gave birth to little crocodiles.

15

PARENGA

Phansa, Koraput District

A Raja had a beautiful daughter. A Dom had a beautiful son. The Dom wove cloth and used to take it to the palace to sell and the son used to go with him. The princess and the untouchable boy made friends. From their friendship came pregnancy and the girl said, 'Take me away somewhere or my father will kill us both.' The boy was anxious: 'How can I carry off a princess?' He ate nothing for three days and prayed to Biskramma Mahaprabhu (who is greatest of all Mahaprabhus).

Biskramma Mahaprabhu gave him a dream, telling him, 'Make peacocks of silk.' When the boy awoke he wondered, 'How can I make a peacock?' He got some bamboo and made its legs as a beginning. He tied bits of cotton and wound thread on them until he had made a peacock.

'Now what shall I do?' He was frantic, for the girl was coming many times a day to beg him to take her away, as the time of her confinement was drawing near. Again he prayed to Biskramma Mahaprabhu. He sent life into the peacock and it flew into the air. The Dom sat on it and flew to the girl, picked her up and flew away. They came to a river and there her pains began. They crossed and then the girl sat down in the sand. 'I can go no further.' There was great pain and she felt very cold. She sent the boy for fire. He sat on his peacock and flew to get it. He came to a Parenga village and tethered the peacock to a tree outside. But the Raja was hunting there; he saw the peacock and went to catch it. But the peacock fought him. The Raja cut off the peacock's wings and ashamed, it hid in the jungle.

The Dom found the Parengas eating beef. His mouth watered and he sat down with them to share the feast. Meanwhile by the river the child was born. At once it jumped into the water and became a frog. In despair the girl followed and she became a crocodile.

16

PENGU

Kelar, Koraput District

There were seven brothers who, try as they would, could not find wives. They had a little sister and they decided to marry her. But the youngest boy said, 'It is taboo to marry a sister. It will be better for us to live without wives altogether than to do so wicked a thing.' The brothers were very annoyed with the boy and said, 'We insist on marrying the girl,' and they asked the girl if she would be willing. But she too said, 'No, it is taboo.' The following day, and the third day, they asked her, and each time she said, 'No, it is taboo.' After that they refused to speak to her.

But the youngest brother and the girl became great friends, for he was the only person who treated her well. The two went everywhere together, to the fields and the forest; the boy even went with her to the well. When the others saw this they were jealous, thinking that the boy was wooing the girl in order to get her to himself. One day they said, 'We'll ask her to bring us gruel to the field and when she comes, we will kill her.' So they said to her, 'Bring gruel for us to the fields today.'

The girl said to herself, 'They have not spoken a word to me for a long time. They have never asked me to bring them food before. Why are they doing so now?' But she took them their gruel, and they caught her in the field and said, 'For the last time, will you marry us?' The girl replied, 'No, it is taboo.' They carried her then to a tank and cut her to pieces and threw them into the water. Each of the pieces turned into a fish and the head turned into a tortoise.

The youngest brother came to see what they were doing, and when they told him, he attacked them with his axe. But they overpowered him and killed him also. They threw his body into the tank and it turned into a crocodile.

17

HILL SAORA

Bungding, Koraput District

A crocodile and its seven sons lived in a tank. It ate so many of the people who went for water that at last nobody went there at all. One day, however, an old man and woman got so thirsty that they nearly died, 'If the crocodile eats us,' they said, 'what of it? We're going to die in any case.' They went to the tank and made a long bamboo pipe through which they could drink from a distance. The crocodile thought, 'I'll never be able to eat these two: they're far too tricky. So I'd better make friends with them.' It said to the old man, 'O son-in-law, your father was a great friend of mine: why are you afraid of me?' 'Because you've eaten everyone who came here.' The crocodile said, 'Don't be stupid. I wouldn't treat you like that. Build a house and live here.'

The old man thought the advice good: he built his house and after a time the crocodile said, 'What's the use of just sitting here, son-in-law? Cultivate a field.' 'But what shall I sow in it?' 'Roots, of course.' The old man cleared a field, and sowed roots. When the roots were ready, the old man said to the crocodile, 'Will you take the root or the fruit as your share.' It saw the green shoots and said, 'I'll take the fruit.' The old man cut them and the crocodile took the shoots and the old man took the roots. In a few days the shoots rotted and began to stink. The crocodile threw them away and went to the old man's house to see what he was doing. There was a great pile of roots and the old man and his wife were eating them. The crocodile asked if it might have some and was surprised how nice they were. Now it said, 'Son-in-law, this year make a rice-field.'

The old man made a rice-field and when the crop sprouted he asked, 'What will you have as your share?' The crocodile thought, 'The roots were very good.' It said, 'Give me the roots.' The old man, therefore, took the ears and gave the roots to the crocodile. Once again, the crocodile found itself with nothing and the old man and his wife enjoying themselves. It said, 'You are very wise. I have seven sons. Teach them some of your wisdom.

I'll send them to you to school. Beat them anywhere you like but not on the head.' The crocodile sent them to the house and the man shut them up in his shed. The old woman said, 'This crocodile wants to eat us; let's escape while there's still time.' The man said, 'No, I must teach them and it is we who will eat them in the end.' She said, 'No.'

The man, therefore, hit one of the little crocodiles on the head and killed it, cut it up and ate it. After that they ate one crocodile a day till they had finished them all. Now the old man had told the crocodile, 'I'll teach your sons in seven days; come yourself on the eighth.' On the seventh day, therefore, the man and woman ran away.

On the eighth the crocodile came and saw the heads of its seven sons and felt very sad and went back to its tank, thinking that sooner or later the old couple would be bound to come to drink. It hid itself where the water was fresh and clear, but the man and woman went to drink where it was muddy. The woman said, 'No, my old man, let's go to the clear water.' He said, 'If we drink muddy water, we won't be hungry.' The crocodile heard him and came after them; they saw it and ran away.

Next day the crocodile hid in the muddy water; this time they went to the clear water. The woman said, 'Let's drink muddy water.' 'No,' said her husband, 'it will upset our bellies.' So they drank the clear water.

At last the crocodile went onto dry land and lay down pretending to be dead. They saw it, and the wife said, 'It's dead; let's eat it.' The man said, 'No, the flesh is rotten: look how still it lies; we can only eat flesh that quivers.' The crocodile heard what he said and made its flesh quiver. The man shouted, 'Look! it's alive,' and they ran away.

In that place, there was a lot of sand. The sun had made it so hot that the crocodile could not get back to the water and so it died. The old couple found its carcass and ate it. Since then the Saoras have eaten crocodile meat.[1]

[1] In Hindu opinion, the crocodile is the vehicle of the Ganges as the tortoise is of the Jamna. Crooke records that the Sonjhara gold-washers, presumably of Sambalpur, used to catch a crocodile alive, worship it, and put it back in the river. Certain tribes in Baroda worship a crude image of a crocodile, and a god exists named Magardeo: see *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XI, p. 376f.

Lizards

18

BONDO

Andrahal, Koraput District

A woman was pregnant. She craved for honey and begged her husband to bring her some. He searched everywhere and at last found a little and brought it home. But she said, 'This is cold honey. I want it fresh and warm.' The husband could not find any. Then the child was born, but the woman still craved for honey. The husband went out again. This time he found a great deal in a tree. He called his wife and she went with her child to get it. She put the child to sleep at the foot of the tree and covered it with a big leaf.

The man put a long pole against the tree and the woman climbed up. When she reached the hive, she sat there breaking off bits of honey-comb and eating them. The bees stung her but she took no notice. From below the husband saw her and the bees black and angry round her head. He thought, 'She must be a witch.' He removed the pole and ran home.

When the woman had eaten enough, she wanted to come down. She called to her husband, but there was no answer, and presently she died. The child became a lizard and the woman an owl. That is why men fear the owl, for it is full of magic.

But the lizard has more magic still. If anyone sees it, he must chase it and kill it. Then he must drive a peg through its head and put seven ebony leaves and twigs above it saying, 'Look, we have buried you. We have done no wrong.'

19

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

Long ago in Mahuapadar village there were seven Didayi brothers, all unmarried. When their parents died they married and separated. They had children and arranged their marriages. The elder brother grew old and died and they burnt his body.

All the body, except the middle finger of the left hand, was burnt. On the third day the people took the finger with the ashes and threw it into the river. It was carried down by the stream and became a lizard. It crawled up onto the bank. Because it has been in the fire, its body is always red and it is always begging water from Rumrok.

20

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

Nirantali told Paramugatti to make her a house. Paramugatti built one for her but when it was ready she wondered what to do about white ants and insects. 'I must make some other creature to eat them,' she thought, 'and keep it in the house.' She got some wax and made a creature one finger broad and four fingers long. She went to Bindra the blacksmith and had four legs of iron made and fixed them in the wax. She made a tail of wax. But when she put the creature in the sun, it began to melt. So she put ash all over it; when the ash mixed with the wax, the body became spotted. Nirantali wrapped the model in the cloth round her waist and nursed it there for seven days. Then life came to it and it put out its head and asked, 'Why did you make me alive? Show me where I can live.' Nirantali took the lizard to her house and said, 'Live here and eat white ants, flies and mosquitoes and here bear your children.'

21

KUTTIA KOND

Susabata, Ganjam District

Rani-aru lived in Saphaganna. She collected all the animals and sent them each to its own place. When they had gone, she went home and it was only then that the snake came. It found no one at Saphaganna, nothing to eat, nowhere to go. It went to a stream. A certain man went for water and said, 'What are you doing here?' The snake said, 'Rani-aru gave everyone else food and land, but there is nothing for me, so I have come here and

I am going to bite anyone who approaches me.' Then a lizard came to the snake and said, 'Why have you come here?' The snake told it. The lizard said, 'Give me your poison and don't live in the water any longer. Go to a tree and bite men as they pass by.' The snake gave its poison to the lizard and said, 'Don't bite men, but when you see them, rush at them and they will fall down, then go away.' Since then the lizard has had poison and, though it does not bite, anyone who sees it meets with trouble or people die in his house.

22

HILL SAORA

Gailung, Koraput District

There were twelve Luamar brothers in a village: not one of them was married. After a long time the eldest got a wife; she conceived and gave birth to a daughter. One day the youngest brother said to the others, 'They don't give us wives. Let us be going somewhere else.' So at night the eleven brothers went away secretly. They went far away to another land. The eldest brother and his wife and child remained in their house. Presently they had two other children. They did their work, but it was difficult to look after the children, for they were busy. The parents thought, 'If only we could adopt someone, she would feed the children.' One day a Saora girl came to the house and said, 'I've no parents, keep me with you.' They liked her and kept her to look after the children.

After a time the parents went to a bazaar to sell their tools. The girl picked some wild spinach and was chopping it up when she cut off one of her own fingers. She dropped it in the hearth, but it jumped out and climbed up the wall. When the parents returned from the bazaar, they saw a lizard on the wall.[1]

[1] See also ch. XX, 37; ch. XXI, 10, 12; ch. XXIII, 4.

SNAKES

23

BONDO

Bodapada, Koraput District

Long ago there was a Raja of the snake caste. The cobra and the viper wanted to meet him. On their way to his court they met a man; by accident he trod on the cobra's head. It was hurt and could not go as fast as its friend and so the viper reached the Raja's court first. The Raja said, 'The one who has reached me first will become a man in its next birth, the other will become a woman.' The cobra was deeply angered by this humiliation and to revenge itself on men it began to bite them and has bitten them ever since.

24

DIDAYI

Chhindiguda, Koraput District

Mangla Naik the Didayi had five sons and a daughter. He managed to get wives for his five sons, but when he and his wife died the girl was still unmarried. The brothers lived together and the sister also stayed with them.

Presently she made love with a youth and soon was pregnant. When the brothers discovered this, they were furious and decided to kill her. They took her to the forest and cut her into pieces with their axes. They buried the different parts of her body in different places, putting her entrails in the middle of the path.

When the men returned home, their wives asked what had happened to the girl. 'She fell down from a rock,' they said, 'and was killed. We did not bring her home but buried her at once in the forest.' The wives said nothing at the time, but next day went to find the body. As they went along the path they found a patch of freshly-dug earth and a cloud of flies hovering above it. They began to dig and suddenly a cobra came up out of the ground. They realized that their sister-in-law's entrails had turned into a snake. To pacify it

they offered it their milk and it sucked at each of their breasts in turn. It was this milk that turned into the poison that the cobra carries in its fangs.

25

GADABA

Gelaguda, Koraput District

In a certain village there were thirty houses of Gadabas. These people had lived there for fifty years. The headman had a daughter, Sunari. One day there was a marriage in Buddhagaon. This girl and her younger brother's wife, Mangli, got ready to go to the party. Sunari was combing her locks when three hairs fell to the ground. Mangli tied them up in a leaf. Then they both went to the marriage. That night after eating their dinner, they danced and Mangli took out the hairs, repeated charms over them and threw them among the dancers. The hairs turned into three kinds of snakes—cobra, krait and viper—and chased the dancers away. After this snakes spread over the world.

26

GADABA

Siliyamunda, Koraput District

Baleka Jhoria of Surgimunda had a daughter named Kammorin. When she was sixteen years old—she was unmarried at the time—her head was defiled and on the day of her purification she went to bathe in the stream at the bottom of her father's field. She washed her clothes and after putting mud on her head, rinsed her hair. As she was combing it, some of her virgin hair came out and she threw it into the water. It floated down the stream where it turned into a snake which swam back to bite her. But she climbed onto a stone and the snake had to swim round and round below.

The snake said, 'You are my mother, for I was born from your hair. Now you must give me food and drink and somewhere to live.' Kammorin said, 'You were born of air and water, so your drink will be water and your food will be air. In a year from

now you may begin to bite men or cattle or any living creature you can get.'

The snake left her and made its home in a hole.

27

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

There was a very old man; he was so feeble that he could not do any work. He had a daughter who looked after him. She used to go to work in the houses of the neighbours; they would give her grain and pulse and with this she was able to feed her father.

One day the girl went to work in the house of a Kommar. He was pleased with her and gave her an iron neck-band. She took it home and hid it in a bamboo box.

Another day the girl went to work in the Raja's house. He was pleased with her and gave her a silver neck-band. She took it home and hid it in a bamboo box.

Another day the girl went to work in a Ghasia's house. He was pleased with her and gave her a brass neck-band. She took it home and hid it in a bamboo box.

After some time, the girl fell very ill and her father wept, saying, 'Who will look after me if you die?' The girl said, 'Don't worry. I have made plenty for you. If I die you will find things in that bamboo box which will help you to get your living.'

The girl died and the old man burnt her body. He wept so much that he could not eat. But in his tears he remembered that the girl had said something about a bamboo box. He opened it and found that the three neck-bands had turned into snakes; the iron band had turned into a black snake, the silver band had turned into a milk-snake, and the brass band had turned into a snake with yellow stripes.

The old man made friends with the snakes and tamed them. He took them from village to village and people gave him money to look at them, for no one had ever seen a snake before.

28

KOYA

Tondapalli, Koraput District

In Dondar, there was a Gour called Samru. He grew old and only then he married. He had one son. He named him Manglu. When the child was one-and-a-half years old, the father died. The widow looked after him well but when the boy was six years old she too died. Now there was no one to care for the child and he used to go begging from house to house. In this way he grew up. When he was sixteen he got wisdom and went to find others of his own caste. At last he found a village with one Gour household. This Gour had a daughter and his wife decided to let the boy marry her. 'For then after our death there will be someone to enjoy our property.' The boy stayed there and a week later married the girl. Husband and wife lived happily, for they loved each other. The old Gour used to take the village cattle to graze. One day he got fever and sent his son-in-law instead. The boy said to his wife, 'I won't be back at midday: you bring my food to the resting-place.'

The girl finished the housework and cooked the food, but she was late in taking it to her husband. He was angry and beat her, but she dodged one of the blows and the stick struck the horn of one of the cows instead and broke it. The cow cursed: 'This horn will revenge itself on you.' It became a snake and chased husband and wife back home.

29

KONDA DORA

Kasuguda, Koraput District

There was a village where only Gadabas lived. There were one hundred and twenty houses of them. One day there was a marriage in the village. Many Gadaba visitors came. When the ceremony was finished, the people sat about drinking and soon began to quarrel. The bridegroom's brother-in-law was offended and got up to go home. The other Gadabas ran to catch him and bring him back, but he took no notice of anyone. He lay flat

on the ground and wriggled himself through their feet and so escaped. But as he wriggled along his hands and feet came off and he looked like a snake. In fact, he became a snake and everyone was frightened of him.

Once he was a snake, he went to live in the jungle. His clothes came off and became another kind of snake. These two became male and female and produced a large family in the jungle. Seven daughters were also born: they were the Sambatsap, the seven sisters. And so snakes spread all over the world.

30

KONDA DORA

Tarpadro, Koraput District

In Sankaldip the spotted she-cobra had many children, so many that there was no room for them to live and play. She wondered how to send them to the Upper World, but there was no way up. She took a bone out of her head and made it into a creature with eight legs and two claws and a tail. She told it to cut a way through the earth into the Upper World. It said, 'I will dig but first cut off my tail.' Its mother cut off the tail and the crab began to dig. When it had made the road, it told its mother it was ready and she took all her children up. When they saw the open fields they began to play and the cobra went down again, closing the hole behind her. The crab and the little cobras lived in the Upper World and the crab made them houses.

31

KOND

Amblibuwa, Koraput District

At the beginning, when Darni Pinnu created men and animals, she did not make any snakes, and people were able to go where they wished without fear. But Bura Pinnu and Samda Pinnu thought that this was not good, 'The rivers,' they said, 'are full of frogs and other living creatures. But men have no enemies and so they are not afraid of anybody and are growing proud.'

So they decided to make snakes and send them to the world to cause trouble.

Bura Pinnu made two eggs from the dirt of his body and placed them in a bamboo nest. He put the nest up in the sky and left it there for one month and nineteen days. When one month and twenty days had passed the eggs broke and out of them came two snakes. Bura Pinnu kept them with him and when they gave birth to many little snakes he caused a great rain to fall and sent the snakes down to the world with it. He said to them, 'Whenever you meet a man bite him if you can.'

32

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

There was an old snake which used to drink the milk of nursing mothers. The other snakes got thinner and thinner since they got no food, but the old snake got fatter and fatter. The other snakes were jealous and there were many quarrels.

One day the old snake went to Nirantali and told her what was going on. She powdered chilli and spices and called the other snakes saying, 'Here is something for you to eat.' They ate it, all of them, except the old snake. Those who ate the food became poisonous.

Nirantali said, 'Now you are poisonous; you must not drink milk, for anyone you bite will die.' Since then the old snake has only lived in rich men's houses, where it gets what it wants.

33

KUTTIA KOND

Palari, Ganjam District

When Nirantali and Paramugatti were born, there was nowhere for Nirantali to sit. She used to sit on the ground with a stone under her and she had to sleep on the ground too; it was so hard that every bone in her body soon began to ache. So one day she pissed on a rock and it broke and became soft. She picked it up and made it into a ball like an egg. This ball she

put under a rock. After a month life came into it; it broke open and four kinds of cobra came out—Kotro Nag, Kultiya Nag, Gokar Nag and Dulhi Nag. She coiled Kotro Nag into a seat and sat on it. At night she slept on two of the snakes and covered herself with the two others. It was in this way that cobras came into the world.

34

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

Paramugatti went hunting from Saphaganna with his bow and arrow. As he went he grew very thirsty and looked for water but got none; at last he came to Sutagati Hill. There under a tree he found a small hollow with a trickle of water. He dug it a little and got some water to drink, then dug a trench all the way to Gummaganna, and made a tank there. In this tank the water collected and when it was full it overflowed.

Paramugatti made a yoke and a plough of wood and a cord. He ploughed the land below the tank and the water followed his furrow. The water flowed to the Jidang jungle and stopped there. There he sacrificed to make it go further and it went on and came to Urladuni and there he made a tank and checked it. Paramugatti threw three large measures of rice into the tank and the grain turned into fish. He threw in his ox-goad and it became a python. He threw in the cords and they became the many kinds of small snakes. The stone on which Paramugatti sat beside the tank became a tortoise.

35

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

Nirantali and Paramugatti pulled the bark off a sago palm and threw it away on the hill above Saphaganna. It turned into a lizard and its wife. Nirantali and Paramugatti said to it, 'From your belly will be born a snake and a scorpion.' The two lizards lived for twelve years and copulated: at last the she-

lizard conceived. In due time she laid three eggs. After two months the eggs hatched out and there came from the first a snake, from the second a scorpion, from the third a frog and a black ant.

When the snake and scorpion were big enough, they went to live apart under stones in the forest: the snake chased the frog into the water and it hid there.

36

SAORA

Kangaon, Sambalpur District

Dankardar Gond lived in Kalamali. He had two wives. He was the headman of five villages and a man learned in magic charms. Yet he had no children of his own, though he tried very hard by his magic to get some. Very sad he went to Bara Deo on Narsing Hill and served him for six years until at last the god gave the elder wife a daughter.

When the child was six months old she asked her mother, 'Where is my father? I want to see him.' The mother did not reply and the child asked the neighbours. They said, 'He is with Bara Deo.' When all were asleep the baby crawled to Narsing Hill and saw her father and began to cry. But he took no notice. So the baby began to serve her father and went on for twelve years, until at last he woke up and asked the girl who she was. 'I am your daughter and I've served you for twelve years.' Then Bara Deo blessed that Gond and said, 'Go to your house and your elder wife: by now she has twelve sons and your younger wife has three daughters. So now you have sixteen children.'

The Gond got up, but in these twelve years his hair had grown like grass; he tied it in a bun and five hairs came out. The girl put out her hand to pick them up, but as the shadow of her hand fell on them they turned into five snakes and coiled ready to strike. The girl screamed. When her father saw the snakes, he was proud of his power and gave them names, Domi Nag, Ranna Nag, Jura Mahamandal Nag, Agiya Nag, Dal Kolit Nag. These five snakes were born from his hair.

37

HILL SAORA

Liabo, Ganjam District

Sipaya Saora had two wives but no children from either of them. One day he made an ornament of silver to tie on his younger wife's head, stretching it from ear to ear. When the elder saw it she too demanded a similar ornament and the man had another made and gave it to her.

After a time, the elder wife went to the forest clearing: when it was time to return, the chain of the ornament caught in a branch and broke. She searched everywhere for it but could not find it.

The following morning the poor woman told her husband and asked him to go with her to find it. He was angry and refused, saying, 'If you don't find it, may it bite you.' The woman went to the forest, but by then the ornament had turned into a snake and it bit her.

The woman said, 'You have bitten me and I will die. And now you will always have to bite men and they will kill you in revenge.'

38

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

When Kittung first made snakes and scorpions, he put no poison in their bodies. He let them go in the jungle, but as they had no poison, no one took any notice of them and they found it difficult to get supplies. The snakes got hungrier and hungrier until at last their leader went to Kittung and said, 'Since the day I was born, I've had nothing to eat: when I do get anything into my mouth, it jumps out.'

Kittung took a little dirt off his tongue and rubbed some of it on the snake's teeth and gave it some to eat. He said, 'Now whatever you bite will die.'

There was a cow grazing in front of Kittung's house and

Kittung sent the snake to bite it and the cow died. After that snakes became proud and haughty.

39

HILL SAORA

Gunduruba, Koraput District

Rangu Saora and his wife made their clearing on the side of Paheri Hill. When their first son was born, the tiger and the bear heard his crying and came to eat him. The Saora tried to drive them away, but they took no notice of him. But when the animals entered the house the woman picked up the child's placenta and cord and threw it at them. The cord turned into a snake which bit the bear and the tiger in the eyes and made them blind. As they stumbled about helplessly, Rangu took his stick and drove them away.

For twenty-one days the snake stayed by the child and guarded him and every day the Saora woman divided her milk between the child and the snake. At last she sent the snake to live in a hole beneath the ground.

But the snake still came every night and while the mother was sleeping robbed her of her milk and the child grew very thin. This is the Ajora snake that still robs many women of their milk.[1]

Tortoises

40

KOND

Koklanga, Ganjam District

In the days before the tortoise was made, the water in the rivers dried up very quickly. Once Pusuruli had a menstrual period which continued for six months; in the seventh month she prepared to cleanse herself. She got seven fans of ashes and seven loads of wood and seven pots of water and bathed in the

[1] For other stories about snakes, see ch. XIV, 7; ch. XV, 19; ch. XVI, 21; and ch. XX, 37.

Sutidukki River. She made a wooden mallet to beat the cloth. She put her clothes in the seven pots with the ashes and boiled them. She beat them and finished them, all but one: she began to beat that too but the mallet slipped from her hand and fell into a deep pool. Pusuruli could not get it out, so she said, 'Go, be Raja of the fish. From today see that there is always plenty of water and don't let it dry up.' In this way the tortoise came into being.

41

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

In the old days when woman's vulva was a span broad and a span wide and the clitoris was fat as your toe and three fingers long, the genital organs used to go wandering about on their own after dark. One night Kittung was passing through a village when he met a woman's vulva going down the street. Kittung did not see it in the dark and trod on it and it cried, '*Cher-cher*' in pain. Kittung picked it up and when he saw what it was, he felt sorry. He carried it to a stream and threw it in, saying to it, 'Live in this water.' The vulva became a tortoise and the clitoris was its neck and head. Kittung got a hen's organ and stuck it on the woman instead.[1]

[1] For other stories about the tortoise, see ch. XVI, 16 and 34; ch. XXI, 3.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

BIRDS

The Nature of Birds

1

BONDO

Rasbeda, Koraput District

A brother and sister lived together. Kittung Mahaprabhu came and said to the brother, 'Give me a marigold.' He went to find it, but there were no such flowers anywhere in those days and he returned angry and killed his sister, for he feared Kittung would kill him. Kittung came and carried the boy away. The girl's soul became an owl; it found a marigold and carried it to Kittung in its beak. The boy had been crying for a long time and his tears fell to the earth as rain. But when the girl brought the flower at Dassara, the boy was happy and dried his tears.

Nowadays, if an owl hoots in the upper hamlet of a village, then people die in the lower hamlet: if it hoots in the lower, they die in the upper hamlet.[1]

2

KAMAR

Pataora (Khariar), Kalahandi District

Manigarh Hill was a place of solitude and peace. Long ago Narada Risi did penance there. He liked the place, for there were no people to disturb him. But one day a lot of birds flew down and shouted at him and mocked his devotions. Narada was furious and by the power of his penance he knocked them off

[1] Throughout India, owls are regarded as ill-omened, and Thurston says of the Konds that 'if an owl hoots over the roof of a house, or on a tree close thereto, it is considered unlucky, as foreboding a death in the family at an early date. If an owl hoots close to a village, but outside it, the death of one of the villagers will follow. For this reason, the bird is pelted with stones, and driven off.'—Thurston, Vol. III, p. 404. A Bondo story (ch. XVI, 18) and the stories about owls in this chapter further illustrate the detestation in which this bird is held.

the trees where they had perched. Then he caught them one by one and twisted their tongues. Since that day birds have not been able to talk in a language that men have understood.

3

KOND

Phanguda, Koraput District

In Kamalabandh, Beneng Raja and his Rani broke open the earth and came out and lived in trees. After a time the Rani conceived, and the Raja thought he had better make her a house. He cut a lot of wood and began to build. When it was ready they went to live in the hut. When the woman's time came she gave birth to a son. Twelve days afterwards the Raja brought roots for his Rani to eat. She ate the sweet roots and hung the bitter roots in a basket on a mango tree. She washed her dirty clothes and hung them above the roots. Next day in the basket every kind of bird was born and they all began to sing at once. The Rani kept the birds with her for seven days and then she and her husband took them to the jungle and let them go. The bitterest of all the roots turned into a crow. The sweet potatoes became parrots, mynas and peacocks.

4

KUTTIA KOND

Padem, Ganjam District

When Nirantali made animals and birds, none of them laid eggs, but all littered in the same way. One day a peahen got a very big belly and could not move about. This meant it could not get its food and it died. Nirantali was very sad at this and thought all the birds would have to die. So for each bird she made an egg of wax and put it in its belly and said, 'After a week lay it and tend it fifteen days.' She gave the birds breasts but so arranged it that no one was able to see them.

Birds give their chicks milk for seven days, then food. But no one ever sees them do this.

5

KUTTIA KOND

Gurlimaska, Ganjam District

The parrot picked some millet and took it to its nest. Porcupine, what did it do? It threshed the millet with its feet. Hen, what did it do? It winnowed the millet by flapping its wings. Fish, what did it do? It dried the millet on a stone. Woodpecker, what did it do? It husked the millet with its beak. Quail, what did it do? It cleaned the millet with its wings. Crab, what did it do? It cooked the millet. Rat, what did it do? It divided the millet. Sparrow, what did it do? It ate the millet, ate a lot. It ate so much that its crop came out on its back.

The lizard threw away the leaf-plates. The frog laughed at the sight. The lizard was angry and killed it. The others were angry and rebuked the lizard. 'Why did it laugh at me?' said the lizard. They said, 'We used to eat together, but now you have killed the frog we will eat separately.' At that the porcupine went to the forest and the rat made a hole in the ground and took its food there. The hen went to live with men. The lizard went to a hollow tree. The woodpecker went to feed on insects in a tree. The birds went to live in a tree. The fish went to the river and fed on slime. The crab made its home on the bank.

6

KUTTIA KOND

Rangaparu, Ganjam District

A Sundi boy and his father were distilling liquor in a little stream. Paramugatti was out hunting. He smelt the liquor and went to get some. When he arrived only the boy was there; the father had gone somewhere. 'Where is your father? Why are you alone?' asked Paramugatti. The boy said not a word but stood staring like a lunatic. Paramugatti thought him mad and a cannibal and shot him with an arrow. The boy's soul came out and went into the crack of a cotton tree; it became a bird

and began to cry '*Kenr-kenr*'. The father came back and saw his son dead and heard the bird crying: it flew out of the tree to him and said, 'Paramugatti killed me and my soul is now a bird.' He took the bird home and kept it in his house.

7

KUTTIA KOND

Sikabaru, Ganjam District

Pijju-Bibenj lived in the sky. He threw down a little child to Nirantali. She was pleased and looked after him carefully. When the child grew, Nirantali took him to bathe in the river. The boy was very beautiful and Pijju-Bibenj desired him and dragged him under the water. This made Nirantali very sad. 'I've nursed him so long and today he is drowned. At least I must see him once a year.' And she said to the boy, 'Become the Twelve-Month Bird.' So it was and he is born once in a year as a bird and lives in the river. When the bird flies up, if its shadow falls on a pregnant woman, it takes a full year for her child to be born.

8

KUTTIA KOND

Sikabaru, Ganjam District

There was an old man who had never married. He made his living by begging, but was very miserable. He went to Nirantali, and she said, 'You must go on living as you have always lived.' She gave him a gourd and said, 'Bring water in this and cook your food on the bank of the stream. When you do so, the fishes will call you Grandpa.' The old man did as she bade him. He put the gourd down and the wind blew through it and it sounded '*Hu-hu*'. When one of the fishes heard the sound, it told the other fishes, 'Someone has come to visit us. Let us go and see him.' Small and big fishes collected near where the old man was cooking. The eldest fish asked, 'Who are you?' The old man said, 'I am your father's father: call me Grandpa.' 'What have you brought us?' So asked the fishes. 'I've brought fishes

and an earthen cooking vessel for you.' The fish said, 'We don't know how to cook, so what's the use of the pot? But give us some salt and we'll eat it.' Then the wind blew again and made the gourd sound '*Hu-hu*' and the small and big fishes danced.

Night fell and the old man said, 'Grandchildren, where shall I sleep?' The eldest fish said, 'Sleep in my belly.' 'Yes,' said the old man and went into its belly. When the sun came up, the man broke through the mouth and came out. Then the old man caught the small fishes one by one and ate them. When he'd eaten all the small fishes he tried to catch the big one. The gourd sounded '*Hu-hu*' and the big fish said, 'What's that?' The man said, 'There's plenty of fun in there, there's dancing and singing. Go in and watch.' But only the little fish went in and were caught.

The eldest fish said one day, 'Our festival is coming: let all, small and big fishes, come to me.' The watchman of the fishes called them. But one said, 'I've no son.' Another said, 'I've no brother.' A third said, 'I've no sister.' In the end none of them came. The watchman went to tell the eldest fish; it sent it back again to say, 'If you have any complaints against Government, come and tell me.'

The old man went off to beg and the fishes thought, 'Let's go and see what's in this gourd.' The little fishes went in but could not get out. The big fish said, 'This old man has caught us all in his gourd: next time he sleeps in my belly, I won't let him out and he'll die.'

The old man came, cooked his dinner and ate it, and when the sun set went to sleep in the fish's belly, but in the morning the fish would not let him out and he died. When he was digested, the fish voided him—one of his bones came out and turned into a bird and cried '*Hu-hu*'. After this, whenever the bird came to the bank and cried, '*Hu-hu*', the fishes said, 'It's Grandpa' and gathered there to look and the bird was able to catch them easily.

9

KUTTIA KOND

Sikabaru, Ganjam District

Originally birds had breasts and they did not lay eggs but littered like animals. They had no wings and could not fly. So all kinds of creatures, especially cats, killed and ate them. The birds felt very bad about this and went to Nirantali. She cut off the wings of the horse and gave them to the birds and cut off their breasts and gave them round pebbles to eat. Then the birds said, 'Why have you given us these pebbles?' Nirantali said, 'If you lay eggs, this will be the same as if you'd fed them with your milk all that time. At the end of twenty-one days, break the eggs and chicks will come out. Then feed them for twenty-one days. If you can do that, you'll be able to fly and other creatures won't catch you.'

10

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

Formerly all animals had offspring except birds. The birds went to Ramma, Bimma and Kittung and said, 'We've been in existence a long time now, but we still have no offspring. How will our race increase?'

Kittung said, 'Will you have babies out of your bellies or in some other way?'

The birds said, 'We are very small; if our bellies swell, how will we fly?'

Kittung said, 'Let all the female birds stand over there.'

Kittung cleared his throat and spat over them and told them to peck up the spittle.

The big birds, like peahens and cranes, ate a lot, and the little birds ate a little. That is why some lay big eggs and some lay little ones.

11

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

Long ago the pio-bird was a girl. As she grew older, she became beautiful, but she could not get a husband and was so poor that she hardly had enough to eat. So she went away into the jungle. There a tiger ate her. Her soul turned into a bird and flew up into the air, crying '*Pio-pio*'. Her old mother wept for her day after day. Kittung said, 'Why are you crying?' 'My daughter has gone away to the jungle and I don't know what has happened to her.'

Kittung said, 'Your daughter will come at night and wake you up. When you go anywhere, your daughter will tell you everything that happens in the house. When she cries *pio* on the right hand, it means you'll get liquor or meat, but if she cries on the left, beware, for it means death.'

Cranes

12

GADABA

Onagelu, Koraput District

A Dom god, Bandhmuli Deota, had a young daughter named Tulisaridai. When the girl grew up, she went to bathe after her first menstruation. She had a lot of bits of cloth, twelve of them, and she washed them and put them out to dry, and then she herself went naked into the water. As she was bathing, Bandor Deota, the god of the wind, came and blew the bits of cloth into the air. They whirled together and turned into a crane.

Crows

13

KOND

Borgaon, Ganjam District

In Inmajhguda lived Tupali Kond and his wife. They had

seven sons, all married. Seven years after the marriage of his youngest boy, Tupali died. The sons performed his funeral rites and the seven sons and their mother lived together.

One day the mother said, 'We've had no meat for a very long time. Your father always used to give me meat. Go to the jungle and get something or other to eat and feed me.'

Next day the seven brothers went to hunt and shot a sambhar but it escaped. They followed, but had to return home disappointed. Next day they went again and after a profitless day shot a hare in the evening. On the way they roasted and ate some of the flesh and took the rest home. To put out the fire the seven brothers pissed on the embers and all turned black but for one ember; the brothers pissed again on it and it became a crow. The brothers said, 'You are our son. No one will be able to shoot you and you'll be the cleverest of birds. When we go hunting, come and tell us where the animals are.'[1]

The crow sought the sambhar all night, found it dead, sat on a tree above it and cried '*Ao-ai*', but the brothers did not understand and went away. Presently a Paik came and he understood the crow's language and found the sambhar.

Since then the crow has led men to dead animals.

14

KUTTIA KOND

Sikabaru, Ganjam District

Nirantali was in her period. It ended, and she took her clothes and went to bathe. When she had washed she threw a small cloth into the air and it caught in the branch of a fig tree. She left it there and took the rest of the clothes home. When she went next for water, she found the cloth had turned into a crow which

[1] Many Konds regard the crow with favour, and Thurston says they will not kill it, 'as this would be a sin amounting to the killing of a friend. According to their legend, soon after the creation of the world there was a family consisting of an aged man and woman, and four children, who died one after the other in quick succession. Their parents were too aged to take the necessary steps for their cremation, so they threw the bodies away on the ground, at some distance from their home. God appeared to them in their dreams one night, and promised that he would create the crow, so that it might devour the dead bodies.'—Thurston, Vol. III, p. 404.

cried '*Ka-ka*'. Nirantali thinking it was calling her, went to it and caught it. She took it home and shut it up in a pot.

But Paramugatti opened the pot and the crow flew out crying '*Ka-ka*' and sat on the veranda. It flew onto Paramugatti's head and pecked at it with its beak until the blood flowed. Paramugatti was angry with Nirantali. 'What is this thing she keeps in the house? It must be to enchant me. I'll never enter the place again.' And he went out in a temper. Nirantali ran to him and pulled him back. 'I'll explain everything,' she said. Paramugatti returned and Nirantali told her story. Paramugatti said, 'Don't keep a dangerous thing like this in the house. Let it go.' Nirantali told the crow to fly away and go daily to the stream to bathe and salute her. 'Then,' said she, 'you can eat any of my food that is left. I wanted you as a pet but you've annoyed Paramugatti, so you'll have to live out of doors.'

15

PENGU

Belgaon, Koraput District

There was once a Raja who had two sons. He gave the throne to the elder. The younger was unmarried and the Raja and Rani died without seeing his wedding. The two brothers lived together; one year they quarrelled with another Raja and the elder boy was killed and the younger reigned in his stead. Only then did he marry.

The Raja had a garden but every day a deer came and damaged it. The servants told the Raja and he went to kill the deer. He sat on a platform waiting for it. That night, when the deer came, the Raja raised his gun but the deer ran away and the Raja returned home disappointed. Next morning, he said to his Rani, 'Till I kill this creature I'll not return.' He took five chaprasis with him and followed the marks of the deer's hoofs to the jungle where it was hiding. The deer saw them coming and ran away. The Raja could not catch it, though he followed it for two months.

The Rani sat by her hearth, weeping because her Raja did not come home. She picked up a blackened stick and held it to her

breast and prayed to Mahaprabhu saying, 'Let this go and tell the Raja how sad I am.' Mahaprabhu made the stick alive and gave it wings. The Rani tied a note round its neck and it flew to the Raja. When it reached him, it sat by him. He caught it and undid the note and read it. It said, 'Come back: there is no need to kill the deer.' The Raja returned and on the way saw a banyan on which many birds were eating fruit. 'Let the crow fly to them,' he said. He called it back but it would not come, for it preferred to live with the other birds in the jungle.

Cuckoos

16

KUTTIA KOND

Bandika, Ganjam District

This is why the koel lays its eggs in the nests of other birds.

One day the crow asked the koel, 'Where do you live?' And the koel replied, 'In the castor tree.'

Crow : 'Where do you ease yourself?'
Koel : 'Sitting on a branch and letting it drop to the ground.'
Crow : 'Who carries away the mess?'
Koel : 'The potter carries it away.'
Crow : 'What does he do with it?'
Koel : 'He makes it into a pot.'
Crow : 'Who does he give the pot to?'
Koel : 'He gives it to the cow.'
Crow : 'What does the cow do with it?'
Koel : 'The cow breaks it.'
Crow : 'Where has the cow gone?'
Koel : 'The cow has gone to the jungle.'
Crow : 'What is happening in the jungle?'
Koel : 'The jungle is on fire.'
Crow : 'Where has the fire gone?'
Koel : 'The fire is hiding in the water.'
Crow : 'Where has the water gone?'
Koel : 'The sparrow has drunk it.'
Crow : 'Where has the sparrow gone?'
Koel : 'The boys have killed and eaten it.'

Crow : 'Where are the boys?'
Koel : 'They hid in a hollow tree.'
Crow : 'What happened to them there?'
Koel : 'White ants ate them.'
Crow : 'Where have the ants gone?'
Koel : 'The peacock has eaten them.'
Crow : 'Where has the peacock gone?'
Koel : 'A hunter has killed it.'
Crow : 'What nonsense you are talking.'

And they began to quarrel. The crow said, 'I am going to kill you.' The koel said, 'No, don't kill me; I'll give you my chicks.' The crow said, 'Very well; put your eggs with mine.' The koel sat in the crow's nest and laid its eggs there and the crow's chicks and the koel's were hatched out together.

Ducks

17

KOND

Koklanga, Ganjam District

Kattaboi and Battaroli, the two sisters, went to bathe in the tank at Gumma. There were many leeches and fish in the tank. A leech stuck to Kattaboi's foot and a fish nibbled Battaroli's. Blood flowed from their feet and they were annoyed. 'We must make some creature that will clean the tank,' they said.

Kattaboi took her pubic cloth and tore it into two bits. She gave one bit to Battaroli and kept one bit herself. With her bit she made a duck. Battaroli made her bit into another duck and both girls stripped themselves naked and danced round seven times. The dance brought life to the ducks. Kattaboi's was male and Battaroli's was female. Kattaboi's bit of cloth had a coloured border. So her duck's wings were coloured. Kattaboi and Battaroli gave the birds names and told them to live on fish and leeches.

When Maoli Pinnu saw the ducks he was pleased and demanded them in sacrifice and when they had bred enough, people gave him what he wanted.[1]

[1] The Konds are rather unusual in offering ducks in sacrifice to their gods.

Fowls

18

GADABA

Surgunnaput, Koraput District

Not far from the Rajisandi [the boundary between Madras and Orissa], there was a hill called Asan. There came Ispur Mahaprabhu and with him Dharmo Mahaprabhu, Pat Khanda Mahaprabhu, Mother Maoli, Mai Mata, Nissani Mahaprabhu and Bhima Mahaprabhu. In the middle of the night they called all the little gods to a meeting. Hundreds of gods and ghosts came, each with his gift—one brought rice, another pulse, another millet-beer.

But Mother Sitiya was very poor and had no gift to bring. And she was pregnant and her belly was too heavy to let her make the long walk to Asan Hill. 'They have all gone,' she said to herself. 'But my belly will not let me go and I have nothing to give. But if I do not go, the great gods will be angry and will trouble me.' As she said this, she laid two eggs. When she had done this, her belly felt lighter. She got up and taking the eggs went to Asan Hill.

Timidly she went before Ispur Mahaprabhu and put the two eggs in his hands and fell at his feet. Ispur Mahaprabhu looked at the eggs and asked what they were. 'Everybody else has brought something useful,' he cried. 'But what is this?' He threw the eggs away in a temper and they smashed on the ground. Out came a cock and a hen. The cock crowed and the dawn came at once and the gods and ghosts ran away in terror to their own place.

19

JHORIA

Umel, Koraput District

Three brothers and their wives lived on a hill called Sarvetijhola. They had no house, but made their home in the forest and lived on roots. The elder brother lived by a spring, the

second brother under a banyan tree, and the youngest in a cave. All three wives were pregnant at the same time. When the brothers went to dig for roots, they usually took their wives with them. But as the time for delivery approached, they went alone.

While their husbands were away, each wife laid two eggs and sat on them to hatch them. When the brothers came home, they said, 'What has happened?' The women showed them the eggs. The brothers said, 'What's the use of them?' And they broke the eggs in a rage.

From the eldest brother's eggs came a pair of geese and went to live by the spring. From the middle brother's eggs came a pair of pigeons and went to live in the banyan. From the youngest brother's eggs came a pair of fowls and went to live in the cave. The chicks opened their mouths for food, and the brothers thought that this meant that they were going to devour them, and they ran away with their wives as fast as they could. Then they thought, 'Our wives have brought this trouble on us; we would be better off without them.' They took their axes and were about to kill them, when Ispur Mahaprabhu appeared and caught them by the hand saying, 'If you kill your wives, how will the world be peopled? These children of yours are not going to eat you; you are going to eat them. And whenever you are in trouble, they will help you.' Mahaprabhu disappeared and the brothers took their wives home.

But now they decided to build houses and, gradually, as more and more children were born, more houses were made and then small villages. When the gods troubled them, they went to Sarvetijhola Hill and caught the birds for sacrifice.

20

KOYA

Tamsa, Koraput District

On the Kalibhag Hill lived a Koya named Gudla, with two sons and a daughter. When they were married, each family went to live separately, but soon afterwards they fell ill and died. Then Gudla's wife died and when the old man found

he was left alone he became an ascetic and went to live on a hill by himself.

One day as he was clearing the gourd in which he got his water, a cock and hen came out of it. He looked after them for a long time until he died. After his death, the cock and hen wondered how to cremate the body: they got very busy and ran to and fro bringing the wood, bit by bit in their beaks, to make the pyre. But when they tried to lift the body onto the pyre, it was too heavy for them. So they pecked off the flesh, bit by bit, and put it on the pyre. They pecked the bones apart too and at last set fire to the wood. When the fire burnt down a week later the cock and hen considered where they should throw the ash. 'Perhaps we should eat it,' they thought. And slowly they ate it up. Soon they had violent pains in the belly and many motions, so they went to Deur and told him what they had done.

Deur saw that wherever the fowls' droppings had fallen, they had burnt the grass. Deur gave them some water from his own house and said, 'Drink this and it will cool your bellies.' After that the fowls' droppings became very cold and turned into frost.

21

KUTTIA KOND

Sikabaru, Ganjam District

Before cocks were made, people had no means of knowing the time, when dawn was about to break, when it was midday.

One day Paramugatti was lying in his sleeping-house with his wife when Nirantali came in unexpectedly and they were very embarrassed. Paramugatti got up and wept, holding his head in his hands. Nirantali said to Paramugatti, 'Don't cry, go to the river, catch a frog and bring it to me.'

Paramugatti got a frog and put it in a basket under his bed. The frog cried '*Kenr-kenr*' half the night. When Paramugatti got up, he found the frog had laid an egg. He hit the frog and it hopped away to Nirantali and sat by her head crying, '*Kenr-kenr*'. Then it sang a song.

The tortoise walks *perchey-perchey,*
The hen cries *kenr.*
Come, come Paramugatti
And stay under my cot.

When it had sung this song, the frog hopped away.

Nirantali went to Paramugatti and said, 'I gave you that frog: why did you drive it away?' He said, 'It kept me awake with its *kenr-kenr* and laid an egg. Who knows what it is.' Nirantali said, 'Tie up this egg with a broom and put it aside. After fifteen days chicks will be hatched out of it.'

Paramugatti tied up the egg and put it away. After fifteen days chicks came out and cried '*Kekerey-kenr*'. When the noise went into Paramugatti's ears, he got up.

In this way the fowl-caste began.

22

HILL SAORA

Pandrang, Ganjam District

Meheru of Santagarh was the shaman of twelve villages. He had five sons and five daughters and, being a great shaman, had no trouble about their marriages. But at the last marriage, that of the youngest girl, Labosum made the bride ill. Meheru himself sought the cause with the aid of his divining fan and lamp. When he was in trance, Labosum came upon him and said, 'Sacrifice a black cock and a black hen and I'll leave your daughter alone.' But Meheru did not know what a cock or hen was, and was much disturbed in his mind. But next day his wife went to the jungle and brought home a nut of the marking-nut tree. She told Meheru, 'By your magic put life into this and it will be a cock.' Meheru got up at midnight, made himself naked and at dawn put life into the nut. It became a cock and crowed. From this nut came seven cocks and seven hens. Then Meheru gave a black cock and a black hen to Labosum and his daughter recovered.

23

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

There was a little Dom boy whose parents died and the Saora Chief of his village adopted him. When the child grew up he asked the Chief to get him a wife, but the Chief did nothing.

Now the Chief had a pretty little daughter. The boy seduced her and made her pregnant. When the mother knew about it, she told the Chief and he killed the boy. The girl wept bitterly, 'Why did you kill my lover?' They said, 'Don't cry; when the child is born, we'll throw it away, and you can marry another boy.' At last the child was born and they threw it away.

The child cried and Kittung heard and came to save him. He took him home and the boy grew up and in turn he too sought a wife. Kittung was angry; he picked him up by the hair and threw him into a tank and said, 'Go and be a fowl, for both you and your father were scoundrels.'

The boy turned into a fowl and wandered through the jungle, where one day a girl fetching wood caught it and brought it home.

Since then men have kept fowls and in the early morning, when Kittung goes to bathe in his tank, a drop of the water splashes into the ear of the cock and it crows and wakes people up.

24

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

One day, long after the other creatures had been created, Kittung made a cock and hen and let them wander in the forest. The hen began to lay, but it only gave two eggs.

That very day Ramma Kittung went hunting and killed both cock and hen. The two eggs were left.

Six months later Kittung came there looking for his fowls and saw the eggs in the shelter of a rock. When his shadow fell on them, they came to life. Kittung had a bad cough and the noise broke the shells and two chicks, one cock and one hen,

came out. They said, 'Ramma killed our parents and we've waited here for six months.' Kittung was pleased and pulled a red thread out of his loin-cloth and gave to it to the cock, tying it round its head.

He took the fowls home and the hen soon began to lay and in time had a fine brood.

Kites

25

KUTTIA KOND

Sikabaru, Ganjam District

Nirantali made the world, but there was no one to measure it. This worried Nirantali, for she never knew how far it was to anywhere. One day, when Paramugatti went to the jungle for wood, he hurt his foot with his axe and some of his blood fell to the ground: it collected in a ball like an egg. Next day he went to hunt in that jungle. He found no bird or animal, but as he was going home he saw the egg which had formed out of his blood and took it home. He said, 'I got no living creature today but I'll take this home and see what comes out of it.' He put it in a pot, placed the pot above the hearth and waited three months. When the egg was about to break, there was a cry of *kenr-kenr* inside and Paramugatti went to see what it was. The others wanted to break the pot, but Paramugatti said, 'If you break the pot you'll break women's bellies.' He removed the upper pot and a kite's chick came out.

In front of the village was a bombax tree and Paramugatti put the bird there. It grew strong and big and when it was ready to fly Paramugatti said to Nirantali, 'It is this bird which will measure the world.' He tied strings to its feet and when it flew it drew out the strings in all directions and so they were able to measure how far was to East and West and South. It could not fly, however, as far as the North. When the kite returned, its wings were broken and Paramugatti said, 'You've

been up to mischief, that's why they're broken.' It swore it had done nothing and Paṟamugatti let it go. The kite said to Nirantali, 'My wings are broken; what shall I eat?' Nirantali said, 'Catch little birds and eat what you can.'

Owls

26

BONDO

Andrahal, Koraput District

An old man and woman had seven sons. At the time of this story the youngest was still a baby. The boys used to eat up all the food in the house and however hard the old people laboured, there was never enough for them. One day the father said to his wife, 'While the children are asleep, let's kill a cock and eat it; they won't know anything about it and we'll be able to eat it all ourselves.'

But the youngest child overheard what he said, and he told the other boys. So that night they arranged that one boy should sleep on guard near the hearth with a broom beside him, and another by the mortar and a third by the pots. Presently when the parents thought the family was safely asleep they got up very quietly and went to fetch the cock. But they found one of the boys there, and when he saw them he said, 'O good, you are going to have a feast; you must give me some too.' They killed the cock and took it to the hearth and the boy there also got up and said, 'O good, you are going to have a feast; you must give me some too.' They went to bring some water and the boy by the pots got up and said, 'O good, you are going to have a feast; you must give me some too.' In this way all the boys got up one by one and gathered round hungrily to share the meal.

Next morning the parents still felt hungry and decided to take their sons to the jungle and leave them there for, they said, 'We'll never get enough to eat so long as we keep such a big family.' So they said, 'Come along, boys, let us go and collect honey.' They took a gourd and went into the jungle. When they had gone a long way, they suddenly ran away leaving their

children alone. They even left the gourd behind, hanging it to a tree.

The boys searched everywhere for their parents, crying and calling '*Hu-hu-hu*' through their cupped hands. The little boy died first; he became an owl, which is always crying '*Hu-hu-hu*'.

Another boy hid in a hollow tree and died there; he became a monitor. Another boy fell into a stream and turned into Singraj, the god of water.

27

GADABA

Surgunnaput, Koraput District

There was once a very famous witch. She killed many men by her magic and everyone was afraid of her. One night the neighbours planned to kill her and burn her body. They came secretly to her house and killed her as she was asleep. Then they carried her body out beyond a stream far from the village and burnt it. One small piece of wood was left unburnt on the pyre.

That night Mardi Deota was going along the road nearby; he walked over the place where the pyre had been and knocked his foot against the bit of wood. 'Why has this bit of wood touched my feet?' he thought and he said to it, 'What do you want? Speak.' 'Make me alive,' said the bit of wood, 'and I will be your servant.' Mardi Deota was pleased and turned it into an owl.

The owl is called the Ghost Bird. The only food it eats is the crab. When it sits on a palm tree, the sap dries, and so we sacrifice crabs to restore the flow. When it sits in a field, the crops wither, and so we sacrifice crabs to restore them. When it sits on the roof of a house and hoots, the people fall ill, and so we sacrifice crabs to make them well.

28

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

One day two Gond women went together to the forest to gather leaves. They saw a honeycomb in a hollow tree, high among the branches. They made a bamboo ladder and one of the women climbed up to get the honey. It was so sweet that she began to eat it at once as she sat on the branch, and dropped dry bits of comb down to her friend crying, 'There's no honey here; there's nothing but dry bits of comb.'

But the other woman realized how she was being tricked and in a temper pulled down the ladder and went away, leaving her friend stuck high up in the tree. One day passed and two days, but the poor woman could not get down. Then Mahadeo and Parvati came by and saw her. Sorrow and thirst had made her very thin and Parvati saw that she would die unless something was done. To save her she gave her wings and turned her into an owl.

We call the owl the Gondin Bird because it was a Gond woman originally. The owl is always searching for the enemy who ruined her life, and sits on the roof crying, '*Gud-gudu-gud-gudu*; come out of the house.'

29

KOND

Haripur, Ganjam District

Formerly Rondama and his wife Kattaboi lived on the Rattawali mountain. They had one son and two daughters. When the children grew up, the elder girl married and went to her husband's house; after this there was a boy and girl left. That year there was no grain in the clearings and great trouble from hunger; the people lived on roots. One day Rondama went to another village for food; while he was there he fell ill and had to stay a week. In his absence Kattaboi was not able to get any roots and the children cried for hunger. She went to search for food and at last found a very bitter root. She cooked it and

gave it to her children. But so bitter was the root that they threw it away and she herself vomited. She said, 'I took a lot of trouble to get this root, yet it is useless. I'll make a bird of it.' She said to it, 'Go and be an owl. And as my children threw you away in disgust, so people will throw you away.' In this way the first owl was born.

30

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

Nirantali took a handful of earth from the place in Saphaganna where she had been born: she cleaned it, mixed it with water and made a model of an owl. This took her eight days. She made its legs of grass and wings of bamboo leaves. For eyes she used big beans, for ears leaves of a bean-vine. She made a soul for it, put it in and it began to talk. Nirantali took it to the jungle and let it go. Soon there were many owls.

31

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

Kittung had a little sister. When he married, his wife did not care for him and fell in love with Uyungsum instead. When Kittung went to his clearing, his wife used to flirt with Uyungsum. The little sister saw what was going on: she used to say 'I'm going to sleep,' and she would lie down and cry to herself. The wife used to abuse her. One day she lost her temper and beat her so hard that she killed her. She buried the body under a mango tree.

The girl's soul crying '*Siu-siu-siu*' flew up into the sky and wept *bugo-bugo* high in the air. Kittung heard the noise and wondered what it was. He came home and asked where his sister was. The wife said, 'A snake bit her and she died. I buried her under the mango tree.' Kittung suspected the truth and drove his wife out of the house. He has never married again. The girl was the mother of all owls.

32

HILL SAORA

Baijalo, Ganjam District

Once there was an epidemic in Galasa village and it was only the power of the great shaman Saniya Saora that saved the people. He took them to the bank of the river Gujri and sacrificed a hen there. After roasting the head, he put it on the bank and went away. But there was a Saora witch; that night she went to the place and gave life to the hen's head, turning it into an owl. She brought back the ghosts and gods that Saniya had driven away, and putting them into the owl took them again into the village. Disease once more went from house to house. The people took the witch to Kittung and he said to her, 'Cure the sick or I will destroy you.' The witch promised that she would cure them, but she said, 'Let my knowledge remain in the owl's belly.' And so it has ever been.[1]

The Papiha Birds

33

BINJHWAR

Bangrapali, Sambalpur District

At the beginning Bhagavan gave every man his work, the Dewar his bow, the Baiga his digging-stick. Viskarma also gave a root to the Dewars and said, 'Eat this.'

One day the five Pandava brothers were travelling through the forest; Drupatta was with them. She was thirsty and Bhimsen went to get her some water. He found a stream where a Dewar had spread his nets and caught many little birds. When Bhimsen saw the birds in the nets he was very angry. Presently the Dewar came to the stream to drink water, but Bhimsen was waiting for him and killed him. Because the Dewar died thirsty,

[1] For other references to owls in this book, see ch. XVI, 18; ch. XVII, 1.

he turned into the *papiha* bird[1] which is always crying '*Pyase hu*'.

34

KAMAR

Pataora (Khariar), Kalahandi District

A woman and her husband went to the jungle. They were just married, that very month. The husband climbed a tree to lop branches. As he was coming down he fell and was killed. His wife sat by his body weeping. She thought in her mind, 'I've been married only a few days and already I'm a widow; let me too die here.' Five or six days went by and she still sat there weeping; she grew thin and the bones showed through her skin.

Then Mahadeo and Parvati passed by and asked the girl why she was weeping. She told them and Mahadeo said, 'Go to your home and you'll soon find a good husband and will live happily.' But she refused. 'No, I wish to die here with my husband.' By now she was so weak she could not stand, she could not even sit up.

Mahadeo tried hard to persuade her, but when he found that she took no notice of him, he made bird-feathers for her and so turned her into a bird and taught her to cry '*Pihi-pihu*'.[2]

Crying '*Pihi-pihu*' she flew away. She was the first *papiha* bird.

[1] The bird, known as *papiha* or *pihu*, about whom many tender and romantic legends have gathered, is not at first sight either tender or romantic. It is the Common Hawk-Cuckoo or Brain-fever bird, whose loud screaming call is rendered as *Pee-kahān* (Where is my Love?) in Hindustani, *Pāos-ala* (Rain's coming) in Marathi, or *More Pihu* (My Love) by the Gonds and Baigas. See Elwin and Hivale, *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills*, p. 84.

[2] Cf. the similar intervention of Mahadeo and Parvati in a Kamar story, ch. XVII, 28.

PARROTS

35

KAMAR

Tikarapara (Khariar), Kalahandi District

When Rawan carried away Sita, and Rama fought against him and killed him and his companions, at the end only one of his attendants was left. This man fell at Rama's feet and said, 'It is good that you have killed all these others, but at least let me live. And restore my friend to life.' For his friend was lying dead near by.

Rama threw the water of life over the friend and made him live, and said, 'Well, I will spare both of you, but now run away quickly, for Lakshman is coming and he will be less merciful and will kill you.' They said, 'But we are not strong enough to run quickly; Lakshman will surely kill us.' So Rama in his mercy gave them wings. The attendant became a parrot and his friend a kite; they rose into the air and escaped.

This is why the parrot learns so quickly to say '*Ram Ram*'

36

KUTTIA KOND

Kalanguda, Ganjam District

Rani-aru was born in Saphaganna and after her all mankind. The people scattered each to his own place and no one was left in Saphaganna. Rani-aru was lonely: she longed to have Paramugatti with her, but there was no one to send to call him. So she got some wax from Kandabara Hill and with it made the body and legs of a parrot. It took her a month. For the beak and claws she got iron from Bindra the blacksmith. For the wings she gathered *phaphan* flowers. When it was ready she made a wax egg and made it clean and white with clay and put the model parrot into it. She took it to a hollow plum tree and hid it there. After fifteen days life came into the egg and the bird was hatched. It went to Rani-aru and asked for something to eat. Rani-aru gave it food for fifteen days. When it

grew up and it was strong enough to fly, Rani-aru coloured its wings with green earth and put red earth on its beak. She taught it how to talk and sent it with a message to Paramugatti, and he came to her immediately.

37

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

On Maori Hill lived a Saora and his wife. One day they prepared to visit the wife's parents. After cooking pulse and rice, the woman stitched some green leaf-cups and filled them with fresh green and red chillies. They started out and presently felt hungry. They sat by a river, put their food on the bank, and went down to bathe.

As they were bathing, the leaf-cup with the bright chillies became a parrot; the leaves became its wings; the red chillies its beak; the green chillies the tuft on its head.

When the Saora and his wife came back, there was no food but only a parrot. They said, 'Our dinner has turned into a bird.' They were angry at first, but the parrot called them, 'Father, Mother' and they laughed and took it home with them.

Peacocks

38

GADABA

Challanguda, Koraput District

One day an old shaman sacrificed a cow to Jaker Deota. Afterwards he put some strips of the flesh on the roof of his house to dry. Next morning, as the shaman's wife was sweeping her veranda with her broom, a kite crying '*Kiorey-kiorey*' swooped down and carried off a strip of meat. The old woman threw her broom at the kite and hit it. The broom turned into a peacock in the air and flew away after the kite crying '*Kirey-kirey*'. This was a very good broom, made with flowering grass, and that is why the peacock's tail is like a flower.

39

KOND

Koklanga, Ganjam District

Formerly there were no ploughts, for no one knew how to make them. One day Bura Pinnu gave a dream to Rondama and said 'Make a plough and cultivate a field.' Rondama asked, 'What wood shall I use?' Bura Pinnu said, 'Go to Kandabar Hill and there get *sal* wood and make your plough.' Next day Rondama went to the hill and started work. Rondama's hair was long and shining. Five days passed as he worked. The wind blew his hair into his eyes. He lost his temper with his hair and pulled it out and threw it away. From this hair was born a peacock and its hen. The cock's tail spread out like hair in the wind and flashed like lightning. When Rondama saw the lovely birds he called them Middu and Talimiddu[1] and told them to live in the forest.

40

KUTTIA KOND

Rangaparu, Ganjam District

One morning Nirantali got up and taking water in a gourd went out into the garden. She washed herself and pissed. As she pissed, a fly sat on it. Nirantali called Paramugatti and Pongagada and said, 'Who knows where this fly will go and to whom it will report what it has seen!' And in fact the fly went to the elephant and said, 'She was pissing; I looked up; it's very long. You go to her.' The elephant asked, 'You see how big mine is. Is it as wide as this, or this?' waving its trunk. 'O bigger than that.' Paramugatti and Pongagada met the elephant going to visit Nirantali. Paramugatti climbed on its back and they went to catch the fly.

The fly went to the tiger, it flew into its nose and cried '*Bhun-bhun-bhun*'. The tiger said, 'What's the news?' But the fly only said '*Bhun-bhun-bhun*', and flew away.

[1] In Kui, *medu* or *middu* is a peafowl. *Tali* is used of any female bird or animal.

The fly went to Pongagada's village. There was a tree and it flew into a hole in the tree. The two men went back to Nirantali and said. 'It's hidden in the tree: what are we to do?' Nirantali said, 'Go cut down the tree, and the fly will come out; catch it and bring it to me.' They did as she wished and got some wax made by the fly. Nirantali made the wax into a model of a peacock and stuck some small bits of bamboo leaf in its head and little slivers of bamboo as its tail, and covered its body with bamboo shavings. She took her silver nose-ring, broke it up and scattered it over the body. It shone brightly and there was the first peacock.

41

HILL SAORA

Potta, Koraput District

One day Kittung quarrelled with his wife and she ran away and stayed with someone.

Kittung searched for her for seven days and seven nights. When he could not find her he started home: at midday he came to Barong Hill. There he found a peacock and its hen. He called to them but they did not answer. He was annoyed and caught hold of the peacock. He said, 'Have you seen my wife anywhere?' 'No,' it said. Kittung now really angry pulled out his pubic hairs and put them on the birds' heads and cut a handful of branches of a bushy shrub and pushed them into the cock's backside.

After Kittung had gone away, his wife came along the road and found the peacock sitting under a tree weeping. She asked what the matter was and when she heard she said, 'But this will be fine clothing for you and you'll look most beautiful.' And so it was, for a great tail grew behind and fine tufts on the head.

Pigeons

42

KOND

Rodigumma, Ganjam District

Bura Pinnu made people, then he had to make them houses to live in. He told them what to do and they built their homes. He wanted to show them how to decorate their houses with pigeons. He went to Golpada Hill to get wood to make a model. After a week his wife Pusuruli went with food for him. He ate it and then put a cot over the pigeon he had made and slept. His wife ate the food he had left. She too lay down but on the ground. Bura Pinnu wanted her and made her lie on the cot with him and they coupled there. As he got up his seed fell from her onto the wooden pigeon. When it touched it, life came into the bird and it cried '*Gutur-gutur*' under the cot. When they heard it, the husband and wife lifted the cot and saw what had happened. They were very pleased and Pusurali made a girl-pigeon for the boy-pigeon and took the two birds home and said, 'Love her and breed and the gods will love you.'

43

KUTTIA KOND

Palari, Ganjam District

At the beginning, when men and gods and animals were born, men sacrificed to the gods and used to give them buffaloes, goats and pigs. But one day Maoli Pinnu and Ganga Pinnu said, 'Give us pigeons.' But in those days there were no pigeons and Nirantali and Paramugatti went far and wide to find them.

Then Nirantali decided she herself must make the birds. She called Paramugatti and sent him to Tikawali Hill. 'There is a great rock there and in a crack is bees-wax. Go and fetch it.' Paramugatti went there and brought it to Nirantali. She made a pigeon of it, making the wings of a fine grass and using grass also for its feet and beak. She put it in a hollow tree and after

fifteen days life came to it. It flew to Nirantali and said '*Gur-gur-gur*'. When they heard of it, Maoli Pinnu and Ganga Pinnu came and said, 'Sacrifice this pigeon to us.' Nirantali said, 'I can't give you pigeons for fifteen years, but then I will give you all you want.' By that time there were many and since then they have been used for sacrifice.

Quails

44

KOYA

Phulimetla, Koraput District

In Kammarkot City ruled Sukhsai Raja. He had many elephants and horses. He also had three wives, each of whom had a son. When the boys grew up, the Raja sent his chaprasis to find wives for them. They searched for three years, but could not find any suitable girls. In the end two of the chaprasis came to Bankatpur City, where Dantsing Raja ruled. This Raja had two grown-up daughters unmarried. The chaprasis discussed the possibility of marriage and returned to tell their Raja. He immediately started preparing for the weddings of his two eldest sons. He went to Bankatpur and brought the two brides home.

After this the Raja went to Dodansai Raja and asked him to give his daughter for his youngest son. When the youngest boy too was married the Raja gave him a winged mare. But the boy did not care to ride it and let it wander in the forest. The mare went on and on till one day a Ghasia caught it and rode on it into the jungle. There he was tempted by its beauty and made it stand by a rock, while he climbed up and attempted to cover it. But the mare kicked suddenly and broke his testes. The left one fell to the ground and became a quail and flew away crying '*Gurr-gurr*'. The Ghasia died in fear and pain.

Sparrows

45

GOND

Mohondi, Koraput District

A certain Challan[1] had a beautiful daughter. When she grew up, many people came to ask for her in marriage. But the father would not give her to anyone, saying, 'Whatever youth will come and live here, to him I'll give the girl but to no one else.'

Now the village was called Chapamali and one day the Gaontia himself came for the girl. But the Challan always put him off. At last the girl herself ran away and married the Gaontia's son. After the wedding the parents-in-law gave the girl a lot of trouble, for they were angry at being insulted by her father.

One day they gave her a cartful of rice to husk and said, 'Finish it by nightfall.' They themselves went to the fields. The girl was dismayed at her task, but she took some dirt from her body and made two birds; for wings she took two big flowers, adding a few red petals for the male bird. She made them alive and asked them to help her get the rice ready. They sat by the rice and separated the grain and chaff. When it was ready the girl made a nest for the birds in the roof saying, 'Stay here and when the others go out to work, I shall feed you.' The sparrows stayed and had chickens, more and more. They all lived in the house and people called them *ghar-rahiyya*—house-living birds.

46

KUTTIA KOND

Sikabaru, Ganjam District

Ururengan brought a little squirrel from the jungle and kept it as a pet in his house. It grew and when it was big it got a baby in its belly. Ururengan asked it, 'You are living all alone; there is no male squirrel; how did you conceive?' The squirrel said, 'The wind blew into my belly and I conceived.'

[1] A Challan is assistant to a Gaontia, who is a village Chief.

Ururengan went to Nirantali and said, 'My pet squirrel is pregnant; what am I to do?' Nirantali said, 'When the baby is born, the flower [placenta] will not come out, and the squirrel will die: roast it and eat it with palm-wine. Put the cord and flower up on the roof.' In due time, the squirrel gave birth, but could not expel the flower and it died. Ururengan put the cord and flower in the roof; it became a sparrow and lived in the house and laid eggs.

Nowadays the Konds catch these little birds and roast and eat them with palm-wine.

Vultures

47

JHORIA

Balia, Koraput District

Long ago when Ispur Mahaprabhu fought with Rawan and wounded him with his arrow, a vulture was born from every drop of blood that fell to the ground. The vultures flew to the Upper World, but Mahaprabhu refused to let them stay there and they came to the Middle World. Folding their claws they bowed before Basmoti [Mother Earth] and begged her to give them somewhere to live. She asked, 'What sort of food do you eat?' They replied, 'We eat raw flesh.' Basmoti thought, 'If these creatures eat only raw flesh, there will soon be no men or animals left.' She said, 'There is no place here for those who eat raw flesh.' The vultures wept. 'Where then can we go?' they cried. Basmoti said, 'Very well then, you may stay, but you may only eat carrion; touch no living thing.' She made them swear to it, and she sent them to live on Singal Hill.

Whenever an animal dies, blood drips from a vulture's wings, and this is how it knows when to look for food.

48

KOND

Sikerguda, Kalahandi District

There was an old man, who had one son. He had no rice or pulse: he used to catch little birds, rats, squirrels and fed his son on them. The boy only ate meat, never grain. When he grew up, he found he could not eat anything else. One day in the village, someone died and the neighbours took out the corpse. The boy cut it up, roasted and ate it. When next day the parents came to see the body, they found the boy eating the flesh. They went to tell Nirantali and she asked the boy why he ate corpses. He explained he had to have meat and could not get anything else. Nirantali said, 'Then you shall always have meat.' She gave him a beak and wings and said, 'Now live on dead flesh.' He said, 'How shall I know it's dead.' She said, 'Ants will bite your feet: then fly up and wherever there's a corpse, you'll see it and be able to eat it.'

49

KUTTIA KOND

Girimel, Ganjam District

One day the clouds began to shake of their own accord and Nirantali wondered, 'What has happened?' She called men and birds and animals and sent them to see what was the matter with the clouds. The birds flew up, but could not reach them; the animals jumped, but were even farther off. Nirantali was very anxious. 'What are we to do?' As she slept she had a dream that on Kandawara Hill there was a beehive full of honey and that she should collect the wax and make a vulture. She awoke, got up in the middle of the night, and fetched the wax. With this she got a vulture ready: she put it under a stone and squashed it to test its strength. Then she went a little way off and called '*Kee-kee*'. When the vulture heard her, it threw off the stone and flew to her and sat on her shoulder. Nirantali said, 'I've made you because the clouds are shaking. Fly up and see what is the matter.' The vulture said, 'Good, but give me strength to go

so far.' Nirantali caught it by the leg and threw it into the air. It flew up and went round the four quarters of the clouds, but found nothing wrong. It came down and told Nirantali.

When it came, it was hungry and asked for food. Nirantali gave it a chicken but when the others—men, animals, birds—saw it they were jealous. It was angry and said, 'All men hate me: where can I live in safety?' Nirantali said, 'Go to Kandawara Hill and live on the tree-tops; you may eat whatever you catch, and when men and animals die, you may revenge yourself on them by devouring their corpses.'

50

HILL SAORA

Potta, Koraput District

In the days before men began to die the population greatly increased. Then Kittung sent death to the world and men and animals began to die. The people used just to throw the corpses away, neither burning nor burying them.

One year there was a great epidemic and many men and cattle died. So long as some survived they carried out the corpses and threw them away, but soon they got too weak for that and the corpses littered the village and began to stink.

Kittung went to Sumher Hill and caught a vulture. This vulture was very thin, for it never got any proper food and could hardly fly. Kittung put it on his shoulder and carried it to the village and told it to feed on the corpses. 'This will be your food,' he said. The vulture ate the corpses and ever since has had all the food it wants. It has grown fat and can fly higher than any other bird.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

MAMMALS

The Nature of Animals

1

BHUNJIA

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

Bhagavan summoned all the birds and animals in order to make one of them Raja of the jungle. He said, 'Whoever can bring from the bazaar a tuft of fine red silk will be the Raja.'

The peacock said to the minivet, 'Go and get it for me; you will fly more quickly than I can.' The tiger said to the monkey, 'Go and get it for me; you will run more quickly than I can. As you helped Rama, so help me.' The minivet flew away, and the monkey went jumping, jumping to the bazaar, but they stopped on the way and wandered about aimlessly. It was twelve years before they returned bringing tufts of fine red silk.

In the meantime the barn-owl got its tuft and returned and Bhagavan made it the Raja of the jungle.

When the minivet and the monkey at last returned, the peacock and the tiger were very cross with them, and Bhagavan told them to tie the tufts to their behinds. That is why the minivet has a red tail and the monkey a red bottom.

2

BONDO

Dumiripada, Koraput District

Long ago animals used to talk to each other and both men and animals had ears like an elephant's. Now the hare had nothing to eat: it was very cunning and said to the other animals, 'Your ears are too long, I'll make them look nice.' So it would cut them off and eat them but it could not cut off the elephant's ears. Then it said to a man, 'Your ears are very long: let me put yours right too.' So it ate the ears till they got small. The man

cried, 'It hurts, it hurts.' The hare said, 'Of course it hurts, I'm not a carpenter.'

The man called the other animals and made them smell the madness-fruit and they became dumb, and he began to eat them.

3

KAMAR

Jhallap (Khariar), Kalahandi District

Once long ago, in the days of the gods, no rain fell for five years. Father Mahadeo rubbed some dirt off his body and made a crow and sent it to Bhagavan's court. There it found Bhagavan discussing with his advisers the problem of getting water. He told the crow, 'Water is going to fall in Jampur.' Mahadeo thought, 'In that case we had better go and sow our grain in Jampur.'

Mahadeo sowed his crop in Jampur and when the harvest was ready, Bhagavan rubbed dirt from his body, made it into a pig and sent it to eat the grain. The crow heard about it and went to warn Mahadeo. Mahadeo was making a plough. He turned the chips of wood into dogs and sent them to guard his fields. When the pigs arrived, the dogs drove them away.

Then Bhagavan rubbed more dirt from his body and made parrots and sent them to cut the ears of grain in Mahadeo's fields. The crow heard about it and went to warn Mahadeo. Mahadeo made kites from the dirt of his body and sent them to guard his fields. When the parrots arrived, the kites drove them away.

Then Bhagavan rubbed more dirt from his body and made rats and sent them to rob Mahadeo's fields. The crow heard about it and went to warn Mahadeo. Mahadeo made cats and sent them to guard his fields. When the rats arrived, the cats drove them away.

In this way Mahadeo conquered Bhagavan and new creatures came to live in the world.

4

KOYA

Dudimetla, Koraput District

There was a Koya called Irma. He had no parents and no one to arrange his marriage. He just had one she-goat and one cow. The cow used to talk to the boy: it was always pressing him to go and get a wife. 'If you don't get married I'll feel very bad, for whenever you go out, I'm left all alone.' At last Irma wearied of this and he killed the cow in a temper. He ate the flesh and went to another village.

He stayed three days there and as he was coming back he met a dog. The dog said, 'Take me with you and I'll live in your house.' Irma took it home. One day he went with it to the forest and there he met a girl and asked her to do love with him. She refused. He was angry and killed her. Then he was frightened that the dog would run home and tell the people what had happened and that they would kill him. He did not go home that day, but called the wild animals round him. When they assembled, he gave them some honey to eat. They were pleased and said, 'This is very sweet; we've never had this before.' Irma said, 'If you turn your tongues upside down, it will taste much sweeter.' With great difficulty, they turned their tongues upside down. Irma gave them more honey, and they were still more pleased. But their tongues stuck upside down and they could talk no more. When they realized what had happened they tried to kill the boy, but he escaped.

5

KOND

Kudelpada, Kalahandi District

In the old days men were dumb, but cows and bulls could talk just as human beings do now. They used to yoke men and plough with them. Men ate grass and leaves and cows ate pulse and rice. But men were very bad at pulling ploughs and the cows had to beat them continually.

One day a boy was pulling his plough and the cow gave him

a good beating. The boy ran weeping to Nirantali and said, 'I have no horns or tail and only two feet: how can I pull a plough? These cow-people have four legs and are fat and strong: why shouldn't they do it?'

Nirantali said to the quail, 'Say to the cow, "Eat rice and pulse" and to men, "Eat grass".' The quail ran to and fro, it got muddled, and said to men 'Eat rice and pulse' and to the cow 'Eat grass'.[1] The cow was very angry and went in its turn to Nirantali. She said, 'Very well.' She brought out two kinds of fruit. One was the fruit of madness and she gave this to the cow but she gave the good fruit to men. She said to the cow, 'Smell it.' The cow smelt its fruit and was struck dumb. But when men smelt their fruit, they were able to talk to each other and fed themselves with pulse and rice.

6

KUTTIA KOND

Demili, Ganjam District

After Bura Pinnu had distributed cattle and goats to men, he kept those that remained for himself. In time, when they increased in number, Darni Pinnu got annoyed with them and quarrelled with her husband. 'Who is going to graze and search for and tie up these creatures? I'm not.' This went on for three days and then Bura Pinnu, wearying of the dispute, called his daughter Sitahoru Pinnu and said to her, 'Take these animals away and look after them.' Sitahoru Pinnu tethered them with wild-cotton thread and took them home. On the way, while she cooked her dinner, she tied the animals to a tree.

When her sister Pusuruli heard that Bura Pinnu had given the whole herd to his daughter and none to her, she was angry and sent a myna to flap its wings and frighten the cattle. It flew round their heads beating its wings and the animals broke the thread and ran away. As they ran they changed their appearance; the goat became a barking-deer, the sheep a chital, the buffalo a sambhar, the bullock a bison.

[1] Several versions of this muddled message occur: see ch. X, 10; ch. XVIII, 39 and 45.

Sitahoru Pinnu tried to catch them but they escaped. She was angry and said, 'The only food you'll get is human beings and you'll have to be very clever to get them.'

7

KUTTIA KOND

Kudimila, Ganjam District

Formerly birds and animals used to talk to Rani-aru at Saphaganna. Many days passed and then one day the Kond gods demanded sacrifice and Rani-aru had to consider which animals she could spare. 'They talk to me and if I tell them they are going to be sacrificed, they'll run away.' Rani-aru therefore made a dumbness-fruit and, calling the birds and animals, fed them on it and said, 'Eat a little, for it is precious and I've brought it from far away.' When they ate, they could no longer speak with men nor could they understand them. It was thus possible to sacrifice them and the gods were pleased.

8

KUTTIA KOND

Gurlimaska, Ganjam District

Soon after Nirantali was born from the ground, there emerged from the same place chickens, cows, goats, every kind of bird and animal. Nirantali took them to her house. Jaora Pinnu took a pair of each to his house: they bred fast and soon he had nowhere to keep them and they wandered out of the house and scattered in the jungle. The chickens turned into peafowl, the cows into sambhar, the buffalo into bison, the goats into antelopes and barking-deer. It was in this way that wild animals came into being.

9

HILL SAORA

Dantara, Ganjam District

When the world was made, a mushroom called Alangpang-

taropid[1] was the first to grow out of the soil. From this mushroom was born Gadejangboi. She stood up and looked round but she could see nothing and she rolled her eyes in wonder. She closed her eyes and sat down. Thus she remained for a long time. Her long hair was blown by the wind into her mouth and in a temper she cut some of it off and threw it away. This hair turned into every kind of grass and tree.

Then, as Gadejangboi sat as she was day after day, lice appeared on her head and it began to itch. She shaved her head with a knife and buried the hair in cowdung. As she was burying it, the lice ran over her hand and she said, 'Go and live in the jungle: don't stay with me.' And she sat down again with closed eyes. These lice turned into every kind of animal and bird, and they began at once to quarrel among themselves. The noise of their quarrels came to Gadejangboi and she was alarmed and went to quieten them. She gave them names and sent them to live apart from one another, separately in the forest.

10

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

Kittung wanted some meat but could not get any. He said, 'I really must have some goat's flesh.' He sent a man to fetch him a she-goat. When the she-goat heard about it, it ran away. All the other animals also fled. The cow said, 'Don't be afraid. I'll go and eat him.'

When the cow saw Kittung, it opened its mouth and said, '*Aah*' and rushed at him. But Kittung caught it by the ear and kicked it in the face and broke its upper tooth. He said, 'You'd eat me, would you?' and kicked it again in the side; the place can still be seen.

In his rage Kittung made all the animals sniff the madness-fruit and since then they have been dumb as madmen.

[1] In Saora, *alangpang* is a mushroom, and *tar* is white.

11

HILL SAORA

Samgainta, Ganjam District

At first when men and animals were born they all lived together and talked with each other. After a time they quarrelled and the animals went offended into the jungle and lived separately. But still when men went into the jungle and met animals, they talked pleasantly together.

One day Kittung killed a rat and gave it to Garpano Saora. Garpano and his household ate the flesh and having tasted it wanted more: they tricked some animals into a trap and killed and ate them. Gradually the animals heard that men were killing them and had become their enemies.

One day a Saora youth was engaged in getting married. For his wedding, men, women, boys and girls went to get wood and leaves. The boys cut wood, the women picked leaves. In one place there was a great creeper with fine leaves, and six girls went to pick them. Under the creeper were five sucklings of a wild sow. They abused the girls for picking the leaves and the girls were so annoyed that they caught the sucklings and cut out their tongues. After that they used no more bad language. The girls went home with their leaves.

When the sow came home in the evening, her sucklings could not talk to her and she saw that their tongues were gone. She went to Kittung and said, 'Men have cut out the tongues of my babies. These people are always chasing us, killing us, spoiling our homes.' So Mahaprabhu called all the animals and made them swear that they would talk with men no longer. 'If you don't talk to them, men will be afraid of you,' he said, 'and they will not trouble you so much.'

12

HILL SAORA

Jirango, Ganjam District

Gorsu Takala and is wife had no child. But when the woman was old, she conceived. When she was six months gone

she said to her husband, 'There are no men here and no animals: when we are dead, what company will there be for my child? Let us make living creatures to be with him.' So these two, Gorsu and his wife, went to the Kolla Mountain; there from a virgin pit they brought out virgin earth and for seven nights and days they worked to fashion it into images. In all that time the woman only made one image: she fixed a bit of her cloth into its backside as a tail and it became a mighty tiger. But in the same period Gorsu made all the other animals.

From Gorsu's organ grew strong branches: he broke them off and fixed them as horns on the sambhar and chital. But he was not able to finish the elephant entirely: its eyes were only half done.

The woman sent the tiger to Gorsu and it roared at him. He ran away and his animals ran with him.

Bats

13

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

In the time of our grandfathers' grandfathers there was a Raja. His Rani's name was Bhuwana Rani. She was a very bad woman. She made no distinction between father and son, but took her pleasure with any man that came along. She cared for neither sin nor virtue. The Raja's Guru often rebuked her, but she took no notice of him. At last the Guru cursed her: 'Whore, in your next birth you will be a bat and you will eat and excrete at the same place.'

In due time the Rani died and in her next birth she became the first bat.

Bears

14

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

In a village called Konharput there were forty families of Konds who had lived there for a very long time. Nearby was a Didayi village.

One year when the Konds were preparing for the Meriah sacrifice they could not get a buffalo. The day for the sacrifice arrived and they were still without anything to offer to the goddess. So they went and stole a buffalo from a Didayi and sacrificed it. The owner searched for it everywhere and finally discovered what had happened. He took a party of seven friends and they went to the Kond village. The Konds were frightened and hid the body and skin, but the head of the buffalo was lying in front of the goddess and could not be removed. The priest threw some rice over it and muttered a charm and the head turned into a bear and chased the Didayis away into the jungle.

After that the bear made its home in the forest.

15

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

On a hill called Kapdongar lived two sisters, Siddhi and Biddhi. They were the sisters of Mahaprabhu. Siddhi had a daughter called Galo; she was a tiny little creature.

One day Siddhi and Biddhi went to see Mahaprabhu and left Galo at home. Galo began to play with some cowdung. She modelled a toy bear with it. She covered it with spikes of spear-grass. She thought, 'If only this was alive, what fun I could have!'

Thinking in this way, she cut her nails to make the bear teeth. She cut her finger and put some of the blood into the bear's mouth. It became alive and tried to bite her. She ran away in fright and shut herself up in the house. The bear sat down

outside the door. There it waited until Siddhi and Biddhi returned and they drove it away into the forest.

16

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

One day some villagers were sacrificing a sheep to Mai Mata. They had just cut off the head when there was a sudden storm of wind and hail. They left the dead sheep and ran for shelter. While they were away Mai Mata herself came and stuck the sheep's head back on its body and restored it to life.

The sheep said, 'Where shall I go? They will catch me and kill me again.' Mai Mata said, 'Go and live in the jungle and everybody who sees you will be afraid.' This is how the sheep turned into a bear.

17

GADABA

Badural, Koraput District

In the old days all animals looked alike. The marks that now distinguish them had not been made. Bhima Raja and Bhima Rani had a tank. It was called Bhima Munda. Rain fell heavily one year and the banks of the tank collapsed and the water flowed out. Bhima Raja sent an order to all the animals, 'Come here at once and mend my tank.' They came and when Bhima Rani saw them working for her, she was filled with love for them and took them in her lap and gave them decorations and ornaments.

The animals piled up earth and rocks in the broken part of the tank, but it was no use; the water continued to flow. The bear picked up a great hill and put it in the gap and this at last stopped the water. But when Bhima Raja saw this great creature lifting a whole hill, he thought that some time it would certainly destroy mankind. So he took it in his lap and gently pressed its back so that a lot of its strength was destroyed. Then he said, 'Go my son and bring another hill and the banks will be really strong.' The bear tried to bring another hill, but this time it

could not lift it, for its strength had grown less. It returned to Bhima Raja and said, ashamed, 'I am sick today,' and lay down and slept. Bhima Raja covered it with a black blanket, and since that day the bear has lost its strength and it has looked like a bundle tied up in a black blanket.

18

KOYA

Phulimetla, Koraput District

There was a village. Bira Koya lived there. He had twelve sons. The boys married and each made his own house and fields. One day Bira said to his sons, 'Don't cultivate separate fields, but unite to make one great field.' This they did. They built an embankment twenty-four miles long and twenty-four miles wide. For two years they did nothing to the field but plough it. When the grass rotted and the field was cleared, they sowed rice. When it ripened, wild animals came to eat it and the twelve brothers made watching-platforms.

One day when the youngest brother was watching he made a fire with a great log. In the morning he left it burning and went home. That evening when it grew dark, there was no one to watch. Deur himself came to see the field and went all round till he came to the platform. When he got there, he urinated. The fire was in the log and it was charred on top. Deur urinated on it and the log at once turned into a bear and crying '*Bal-bal-bal*' attacked him and Deur ran away. As he was running the field-watchers met him and asked what was the matter. He said, 'There's a bear coming: it will eat you. It is not even afraid of me.'

They all ran away, leaving their food behind. It was rice and the bear ate it.

19

KOND

Demili, Ganjam District

Sitahoru Pinnu lived on Bonger Hill. One day she went

to see her father Bura Pinnu and stayed with him for seven days As she was going away Bura Pinnu gave her a small pot of oil. She took it home and put it in her house. Gradually she used it up. She made some herself and threw the waste behind her house and an ant-hill grew up there.

Sitahoru put oil in the pot, but after a time it cracked and the oil leaked out. One day she took out her pot to get some oil and found it empty. She was angry and put some white corn in it and buried it where she had thrown the oil-waste. From this pot a bear was born in the ant-hill; the corn became white marks on its forehead and it cried, '*Phal-phul, phal-phul*'.

When Sitahoru heard it she came out and called it *oli* (bear) because of the *oli* (corn)[1] and said, 'In the ant-hill you'll find your food.' She told it to go to the jungle. and when it refused she called a she-goat and it drove the bear away. Ever since, bears have been afraid of goats.

20

KUTTIA KOND

Girimel, Ganjam District

At the beginning, Nirantali gave a home and food to every living creature. The bear was born from the very place where Nirantali was born. For seven days it wandered round in the same spot, then it said to Nirantali, 'Why did you go up, leaving me behind? I have followed you with great difficulty. Now give me a good home and some good food.' Nirantali searched but could not find anything for it to eat. She said, 'Go to the hills and live there; dig earth and eat whatever you can find. Your food is under the earth.' The bear said, 'How can I tell where to dig?'

Nirantali called the bear to her hearth and made its forehead black. 'This will be your mirror,' she said, 'and by this you will be able to see down below the earth. Your nose too will notice a sweet, sweet smell wherever there is food under the ground. If you don't get it there, you'll have to live on berries.'

[1] In Kui, *oli-joeli* is a large species of Indian corn, and *oli* is a bear.

21

KUTTIA KOND

Sachenda, Ganjam District

Nirantali made a bear of clay. She put a soul in it and let it go. The bear said, 'Where shall I go?' Nirantali said, 'Go to the jungle and eat white ants and wild figs and berries.'

The bear wandered along until it found a sago palm. One of the branches fell on it and blood flowed from the wound. Sesamum had been sown there and the seed stuck to the blood on its body and it turned black. When it went for its food and was eating ants, a man came by with a lighted bamboo torch searching for mangoes. The fire caught the bear and burnt its face and it ran to Nirantali and said, 'A man has burnt me, so I'm going to eat him.' Nirantali said, 'It was an accident, don't eat him; go and salute the plantain tree and the wound on your face will be healed.'

This is why the bear does not eat human beings.

22

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

A Kond went to eat figs. He climbed the tree and a she-bear followed him. The bear asked, 'Why are you climbing?' 'For figs.' 'Give me one.' 'Which? Shall I give you that?' 'No.' 'This?' 'No.' At last the Kond said, 'Shall I give you my own eggs?' 'No.' 'Then what can I give?' The she-bear said, 'If you can't give me anything, marry me and come home with me.'

The bear had two sons and a house under a rock. The bear took the man home and shut him in the house, saying, 'Stay with the children. I'll go and get figs and we'll have our dinner.' The man said 'Yes,' and off went the bear. The man put little stones and sticks in the mouths of the cubs and they died. He wept, 'The bear has waddled away: its cubs were left behind.'

When the bear returned, it asked, 'Why are you crying?' 'Because your cubs are dead.' The bear said, 'If they die, they

die. But I'll get many more from you.' The man said, 'Come, let's go to my parents' house.' The man took her and made her stand in the court before his house. He went in and his parents asked him, 'Where have you been?' He told them. 'Where's your bear-wife?' 'In front of the house.'

The man said to his younger sister, 'Go and call it elder brother's wife.' She went and said, 'Come, elder brother's wife.' The bear said, '*Hu-hu.*' The girl ran back into the house. The man's elder brother went and said, 'Come, daughter-in-law,' and the bear stood up on its hind legs and showed its big teeth. The man said, 'Never mind. You may be a bear, but whatever you are, you are my brother's wife, so come into his house.' The bear came in. They shut it up in one of the rooms and after giving it some millet to husk went to their clearing.

The bear husked the millet and ate all but a little. So passed two or four days. The elder brother wondered why there was so little millet left. One day he gave a lot of grain to the bear and made a hole in the wall and watched. He saw the bear husk and then eat most of the millet. He was angry and said, 'Daughter-in-law, your nose is very long. Come. I'll cut it off and your face will be the same size as mine.' He cut off its nose and the bear went crying to the jungle.

23

SAORA

Gariaguda, Ganjam District

Santal Saora had two wives. Each wife gave birth to twin sons at the same time. They were called Sittu-Mittu. When the boys grew up, Santal first arranged the marriages of the sons of the elder wife. The younger wife was angry, thinking her sons had been neglected. That evening she made rice-bread, but she was slow about it and Santal abused her. In a fit of temper she ran off into the jungle with her two sons. But her husband picked up the small black earthen pot they had used in the marriage and threw it after her saying, 'Go Mahapurub, go and stop her, catch her and bring her back.' The pot turned into a bear and stood in the road before the woman. She tried to push

it aside; her hands were still covered with rice-flour and left marks on the animal. Then she returned home to her husband.

Buffaloes

24

BONDO

Bandapada, Koraput District

Our forefathers were born of old at Kappor Chua. There were two she-buffaloes, but while they remained there they gave no milk. They went to Bandapada and wandering, wandering, came to the spring Champa Chua and rested below a *champa* tree. Then as the buffaloes went back to Kappor Chua, milk came from them, so much milk flowed that there was a stream running down the path. So our forefathers never found milk at Kappor Chua but only at Champa Chua, and so it has been ever since.

25

BONDO

Andrahal, Koraput District

Long ago a bull buffalo and a horse were great friends, such friends that when they went out to graze they used to remove their organs and put them together in a safe place until they returned. In those days the horse could fly and was as powerful as the buffalo.

One day when the two friends returned from wandering in the forest, they began to quarrel about their organs. Both claimed the larger one, which was the buffalo's. In the struggle a bit of the buffalo's organ was knocked off but the horse seized the rest of it and flew away. The buffalo, very disgruntled, had to do as best it could with the horse's organ instead. It stuck the broken bit of its own organ into the ground and it turned into a plantain tree.

Even now whenever the buffalo sees a plantain it butts it, for the tree reminds it of its lost organ, and it always tries to injure its former friend the horse.

26

KOND

Amblibuwa, Koraput District

Dakpaji and his wife Sujamajenja created men and divided them into castes. Then they thought, 'There are no creatures to help men till their fields.' So they rubbed dirt off their bodies and Dakpaji made a model of the buffalo. He made a little house and put the buffalo in it. He went out of the village and shouted, '*Dar-dar*'. When he shouted, two buffaloes, male and female, were born from the image and crying '*Orn-orn*' they went to him. Dakpaji took them to his house. They bred and when there were enough, Dakpaji called men and distributed them, giving a pair to each.

27

KUTTIA KOND

Borga, Ganjam District

In the old days people lived on leaves and grass and their blood was green and watery. Nirantali thought, 'There is no proper blood. What are we to do?' She decided to get a buffalo and give its blood to human beings. So thinking she called the shaman and said, 'I'm going to have a festival and I'll kill a buffalo and everybody is to eat the flesh and drink its blood, for up to now these people have had no proper blood.' She got the buffalo and called the neighbours and made them eat its flesh. She said, 'Eat rice, meat and meat-juice and your blood will become red and you'll be strong.' Ever since they have done this. When they had eaten, Nirantali cut somebody's finger and found the blood was red. This proved to her that the blood was now all right.

28

KUTTIA KOND

Malaka, Ganjam District

When men and gods were first born, and the jungle and hills

were made, they had all the animals to serve them except the buffalo. People used to sacrifice to the gods, but they had nothing to give the hills.

When the hills found they got nothing to eat, they wept. They came to Nirantali and said, 'You've given everyone else something to eat, but you've left us to die of hunger.' Nirantali offered them every animal in turn, but they refused. 'These are the leavings of other gods; we won't take them. We want the biggest and blackest of all animals.' Nirantali said, 'Go away for fifteen years and then come to me.'

In their absence she cut some *sarai* wood, stripped it of its bark, made four legs, a head, eyes and horns. For tail she put a bit of string. She spread wax all over the body and as she did so, the wood turned into bones and the wax into flesh and skin. The creature could not see with its wooden eyes, so Nirantali took them out and put snails instead. She put grass for hair on its head. When it was ready, she blew into its mouth and it became alive. When the hills came again, Nirantali said, 'I told you not to come for fifteen years but you've come in fifteen days.' She sent them away and for fifteen years the buffalo bred, and when there was a herd, people began to sacrifice them to the hills.[1]

29

HILL SAORA

Potta, Koraput District

All the animals had horns except the buffalo. Even cows and goats were able to beat it and frighten it away. So the buffalo used to graze alone and live apart from other animals. When people tried to plough with it, the yoke used to slip over its back and it would escape—which made ploughing very troublesome.

The farmers told Kittung about this and he went to Tarling Hill and brought *sisam* wood and made two pairs of horns; he

[1] Among Konds and Saoras, the buffalo is the most important of the sacrificial animals: it is used by the Konds as a substitute for a human being at the Meriah festival, by the Saoras at the great funerary rites of the Guar and Karja.

put the small pair on the she-buffalo and the big pair on the he-buffalo and said, 'Don't be afraid any more; now other animals will be frightened of you.' He said to men, 'When the buffalo dies, remove the horns and use them as trumpets.'

30

HILL SAORA

Busambo, Ganjam District

One day Kittung went somewhere, leaving his wife at home. For four or five days he did not come back and his wife made a small doll of millet flour and fried it in oil. After a little while she was hungry and said to herself, 'Shall I eat it now or shall I first make it look nice?' She put it in front of her and with the nail of her left hand began to model it with horns.

When Kittung returned his wife was afraid and threw the doll away where the waste water was and gave her husband his supper. Kittung took a gourd of water to wash his hands and went outside: he filled his mouth with water and blew it into the pit: the water fell on the doll and from it two buffalo calves, male and female, were born. Kittung went back for his food and the calves sported in the water. When Kittung had finished he went to the place and saw them. He was very pleased and asked, 'Where have you come from?' His wife told him. Kittung said, 'You made them for food, so the Saoras will eat their flesh.'

Cats

31

GOND

Chacharaguda, Koraput District

There was a village, Pandaraguda, where only Murias lived. But one day a Gour settled there and took over the work of grazing the village cattle. He used to milk the cows and keep the milk for himself.

In those days cats and rats did not live in houses. A Muria

brought some kittens from the forest and kept them in his house. One day, when the Gour was out grazing, he found a baby rat and took it home. He made an iron cage for it and fed it on rice and pulse. When the rat was fully grown, the cat came to the Gour's house. The Gour and his wife were out, and the cat wanted to eat the rat but could not get it out of its cage. But it saw some milk in a pot, drank it and broke the pot.

In the evening when the Gour and his wife came home, they found the cat in the house and the pot broken. They caught the cat, beat it and tied it up. The cat begged pardon and promised not to do it again. The Gour made it swear to this and then he let it go. Presently the rat had a litter in the cage and when there were too many, the Gour let them out and they played on the floor. But the cat forgot its oath and killed some of them. So rats had to make holes where they would be safe.[1]

32

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

A cat was born in Saphaganna, in the very place where Nirantali herself had been born. One day it went to Nirantali and cried '*Meo-meo*'. Nirantali was frightened and said to herself, 'What creature is this? Will it eat me or what?' She ran home and hid in her house. The cat followed and sat down outside. Nirantali peeped out to see what it was doing. Just then out came a mouse and the cat pounced on it and killed it. Nirantali thought, 'This is a good creature; it is just what I want to protect my grain-bins. I am going to keep it in my house.' She opened the door and the cat went in and made its home there.

[1] Some tribesmen keep cats as pets, many more tolerate their presence in the house. But cats can be used by witches for their unhallowed purposes, and there is a Gadaba belief that the ghost of a man killed by a tiger may turn into a cat and, unless correctly propitiated, may enter the house and eat the liver of a sleeping relative.

33

KUTTIA KOND

Banda, Ganjam District

Originally Rani-aru and Sona-aru were both married to Paramugatti. He first married Rani-aru, but as he had no child from her, he married Sona-aru as well. In due time Sona-aru conceived. Every day Paramugatti went to his clearing to sleep there. Rani-aru thought, 'Now Sona-aru is getting a baby and will be very happy: what sort of fate will I have?'

When Sona-aru's time came, Paramugatti did not want to go to his clearing, but Rani-aru said, 'Go and hang a cow-bell on your platform; we'll tie a cord to it from the house and when the child is born we'll pull it.' So Paramugatti went to the clearing and when Sona-aru's pains began she said to Rani-aru, 'Sister, how am I to give birth? I don't know what to do.' Rani-aru tied a rope to the roof and drove two stakes into the ground. She tied the woman's legs to the stakes and told her to hang onto the rope. Then she blindfolded her. In this way the woman gave birth to a son.

When Rani-aru saw the child she hurriedly made a cat of wax and put it in its place. The child she killed and buried. Then she pulled the cord to let Paramugatti know and he came running to the house. Rani-aru said, 'Look! She has given birth to a cat.' The cat had become alive by this time and Paramugatti said 'I'm not going to have a cat's mother in my house. You must go away, but I'll keep this cat and it can kill any rats we have.' So it happened. One day the cat went wandering into the jungle. On the way, it found a cave under a rock and there was a tiger-cub all by itself. The cat said, 'Who are you? Why don't you come out?' The tiger said, 'I was born here and am afraid of going out.' The cat said, 'Look what a tiny creature I am, yet I'm not afraid to go everywhere.' So the tiger-cub came out and the cat said, 'We'll live together: I'll catch rats and by watching me you can learn to catch cows and deer.'

One day the tiger-cub caught a sambhar and dragged it home. 'But how are we to eat it raw? Bring fire and we'll cook it.' The cat went to the village for fire and searched till it found

some oil-seed which was being pressed. She liked the smell and so was late in bringing the fire. The tiger said, 'Why is she so late? She must be flirting with someone.' When the cat came back, the tiger started a quarrel, but the cat said, 'No, I was just smelling some oil-seed and licking it a little.' The tiger said, 'I don't believe you. We can no more be friends. I'm going to eat you.' The cat replied, 'How can you eat me? You can't even find my excreta.' The cat ran away. The tiger chased it, but the cat escaped into the village.

Since then the tiger and the cat have been enemies and when the cat excretes, it scrapes a hole and hides the mess.

34

PARENGA

Dumriput, Koraput District

Long ago, the tiger used to cook its food before eating. One day when it went to a village to fetch fire, the people were frightened and they shut themselves up in their houses.

The tiger went instead to its sister for fire. She had just given birth to a cub, and the tiger thought, 'I'll send this cub for fire; it's so small that nobody will be afraid of it.' But the tiger did not like to say anything to its sister. Instead, when she brought it food, it refused to eat anything. 'Why, what's the matter?' said the tigress. The tiger said, 'There's nothing really the matter. But I want your child to do something for me.' The tigress gave the tiger the cub to keep as its own.

The tiger took the cub home and used to send it for fire. One day the cub went to a Gour's house and found some milk there. It was so pleased with the milk that it did not come home, but stayed in the Gour's house. The tiger watched the road for a long time until it was weary, but the cub did not come. Then the tiger went to find it. When it came to the Gour's house, the cub hid in a rat's hole. The tiger said, 'You're not a tiger; you're a *billi* (cat), for you have hidden in a *bil* (hole). I suppose I'll have to eat my food raw now, but it can't be helped. As for you, however, I'll eat you if I can catch you, and even if I find your droppings I'll eat them.'

This is why the cat hides its excreta, for fear the tiger will find it.

Cows

35

BONDO

Kirsanipada, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu had a cow: he used to milk it. One day he called the neighbours to drink milk. All who did not eat beef went and got their milk. The Bondos and Doms arrived late and the milk was finished. Mahaprabhu said to the Doms, 'Go and get some.' They got a little. Then the Bondos sat down hopefully but they got none and said, 'What are we to eat?' Mahaprabhu said, 'Since you have not got the milk, you will have to eat the flesh.'[1]

36

BONDO

Basupada, Koraput District

Formerly cows ate human beings who were so frightened that they could not catch them. Mahaprabhu caught a cow, tied a rope round its neck and tethered it to a pillar before his house. He gave it nothing to eat and when it got really hungry, it promised not to eat men any more, but to serve them instead.

37

BONDO

Gokurapada, Koraput District

The cow used to bite and Mahaprabhu sent it a root by the

[1] All the tribesmen used to keep cattle for agriculture, sacrifice and food. Under Hindu influence many of them have ceased to kill cows openly even for sacrifice, though the practice continues secretly and most tribesmen do not hesitate to eat the flesh of a cow which has been killed accidentally or by a wild animal. The custom is so firmly established in the mythology that it is hard for the people to believe that beef-eating is as wicked as their Hindu neighbours say it is. Very few tribesmen, however, drink milk; it is actually taboo to the Hill Saoras.

dog. The dog gave the root to the cow. It asked for its share and the cow gave it a small piece. Mahaprabhu saw this and angrily slapped the cow's face and knocked out its upper teeth. He caught the dog by the tail and twisted it. Since then the dog's tail has been curly and whenever it sees anyone, it is frightened and barks.

38

BONDO

Datipada, Koraput District

A man went to relieve himself: when he went away, a cow ate it and when the pig went for its share it found nothing left. It said to the cow, 'Mahaprabhu sent me to earth to eat this; why have you eaten it? You are bigger than I. I am going to Mahaprabhu.' The pig went to Mahaprabhu and told him.

Mahaprabhu gave a root to a dog. 'Give this to the cow,' he said, 'Once it has eaten this it won't want to eat excreta any more.' The dog took it but ate it itself on the way and returned. Mahaprabhu asked the dog, 'Did you give it the root?' It could say nothing but '*Ha-ha*'.

Mahaprabhu went to the cow and asked if the dog had given it the root. 'No,' said the cow. 'Why did you eat excreta?' said Mahaprabhu angrily. He cursed the cow and the pig both to remain dumb, for fear they would quarrel. He punished the dog by making it bark.

39

BONDO

Dumiripada, Koraput District

Originally the Bondos did not know how to plough with cattle; men themselves used to pull the plough with ropes over their shoulders. They worked hard and ate twice in the day.

Mahaprabhu thought that there would not be sufficient food to go round, so he sent a bullock to tell men that they must only eat once. But as the bullock was on its way a partridge flew up from under its feet and startled it so much that it forgot exactly

what its message was. When it arrived it said, 'Mahaprabhu orders you to eat twice every day.' 'We do that already,' said the Bondos and laughed at him.

When the bullock returned, Mahaprabhu asked it, 'What message did you give?' 'I told them to eat twice every day.' Mahaprabhu was angry and said, 'Go yourself and pull the plough for men; otherwise there will not be enough food for them to eat twice a day. They will have to eat you also. If they do, it will be well for you; but if they do not, you will be cursed.'

The bullock went back to earth and ever since has dragged the plough for men and men have eaten its flesh at their feasts.

40

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

There was a shaman. His wife died, leaving a son and daughter. One night Markajaker Deota came to the village and stood by the door of the shaman's house. He said, 'I am very hungry. Give me something to eat and a place to live.' So saying, he went away. The shaman woke and wondered who had spoken to him. He went to sleep again and when he got up in the morning forgot all about it. But that day many of the neighbours fell sick and disease broke out among the cattle.

The shamanin was called and she took her winnowing-fan and sought the cause of the trouble. Markajaker Deota came upon her and said, 'I told the shaman what I wanted, but he took no notice of me. So I am going to devour you all, for I am very hungry.' When the villagers heard this, they cursed the shaman and quickly made a little hut for the god. The shaman bathed and sacrificed a fowl and cooked rice before the hut.

The shaman's children were very small and they had no mother, so he took them with him. When the rice and meat was ready, he put portions of it in leaf-cups, laid them out before the hut, and went back to his house to get some liquor. But while he was away the children ate the food that had been offered to the god. The boy turned into a bull and the girl into a cow. The bull at once approached the cow. When the shaman returned and saw the

two strange animals and the food destroyed, he was very angry and wanted to kill them. But the god caught him by the hand and said, 'Don't hurt these animals. They are your own children. Keep them, and when they increase, sacrifice them to me.'

41

KUTTIA KOND

Karkori, Ganjam District

From the place in Saphaganna where Nirantali was born, there presently emerged a cow. It wandered round and round for eight days, but no one took any notice of it.

One day Nirantali went to bathe in the Gunjianu River. The cow heard the splashing of the water and went to see what was going on. When Nirantali saw it, she was frightened and hurried home. When she reached the house the cow was close behind her. In front of the building was a stone pestle. Nirantali picked it up and hit the cow on the face and broke its upper teeth. They flew far away and fell and turned into Ranipalu Mountain.

After that Nirantali kept the cow, for she knew there was no longer any danger of it biting her.

42

KUTTIA KOND

Deovalli, Ganjam District

Nirantali was under the earth; she made a cow. It had horns and a tail and very big teeth, but it stood upright on two legs like a man.

One day some peasants came to visit Nirantali; they saw the cow and said, 'Give it to us and we'll have something to plough with.' They took it and tried to yoke it to a plough, but it bit them and broke away and then went about biting and injuring everyone it saw. The peasants went to Nirantali and told her. She said, 'Very well then, bring it here.' When the cow came, she hit it with a pestle and killed it. She said, 'Now you can eat it.' The people cut up the carcass and feasted on the flesh.

The Nangbasi, Gangbasi, Kadaraji and Bedaraji were Rajas in those days. They got no milk after the death of the cow and complained to Nirantali, 'We get no milk nowadays.' Nirantali gave them some cow's meat and bones. The Rajas mixed it with wax and made a little model cow with bits of bamboo for horns, and shut it up in a bamboo box. When they shut it up, life came into it and there was a tiny cow the size of a mouse.

The Rajas gave it to Nirantali, saying, 'Look after it and when there are many calves, give them to us and we'll get our milk.' Nirantali did so.

This is why the Konds do not drink milk, but eat only the flesh of the cow: milk is for Rajas.

43

KUTTIA KOND

Sikabaru, Ganjam District

Nirantali and her daughter Rani-aru worked together on a clearing. When it was ready they sowed all the different mountain grains there.

There was a bull which had hands and feet like a man, horns on its head and the ears of a cow. Rani-aru screamed, 'Mother, mother.' The bull's seed fell on the ground. Rani-aru picked up the wet earth and made it into a ball and wondered how to call her mother. She made it into a bee and sent it to her.

Nirantali came running to the clearing and hit the bull twice on the head, once on the belly and killed it. Nirantali said to her daughter, 'This creature would have killed you, so we'll eat its flesh. We'll keep its horns and tail and cut a branch of a bombax tree and tie the horns and tail to it and hang up its four feet and cover them with clay and so turn it into a cow.'

44

PARENGA

Dumriput, Koraput District

In the old days cows and bulls used to talk to each other just as if they were human beings. There was an old man who had

a cow and a bull in his house. His son used to take them out to graze in the best pasture. One night, however, the animals broke out of their shed and went to eat rice in someone's field. The boy followed them and said, 'I have always taken you where the best grass was to be had, but you have broken your shed and now you are stealing rice. Who is going to build you a new shed?'

The cows answered, 'You people eat three times a day, yet you cannot fill your bellies. How can we fill our bellies with a little grass?' The boy lost his temper and hit them, and they attacked him. The boy ran back to his house and shut the door. They struck it with their horns, trying to break it down.

While they were doing this, Ispur Mahaprabhu came by. He stood in the road outside and called to the boy. 'What is the matter?' The boy replied, 'It is these ungrateful and thieving animals.' Mahaprabhu said, 'Come out and tell me all about it.' The boy replied, 'I can't come out; if I do, they'll kill me.' Mahaprabhu caught hold of the cow and the bull, and then the boy came out and told his story. Mahaprabhu was angry and kicked the animals in the belly and said, 'However much you eat, you will always be hungry.' He twisted their tongues and said, 'Now you will no longer be able to talk, but you will be the servants of men, and one side of your bodies will always be hollow.'

45

PARENGA

Dumriput, Koraput District

Ispur Mahaprabhu sent a party of gods to the Middle World to tell men how they ought to live. After they had departed, Ispur's wife Sinadai tore up one of her cloths and made the cow Mother Kapila. Ispur told the cow to follow the gods down to earth and listen to what they were saying.

Mother Kapila found the gods in a Parenga village. They said, 'You people must live properly. Take a bath every day, and eat once a week.' Mother Kapila interrupted them. 'That's all wrong,' she said. 'You should bathe once a week and eat three times a day.' Men were very pleased with the cow's advice and worshipped her for it.

The gods returned to Ispur Mahaprabhu and told him what they had said and how the cow had interrupted them and changed their message. Ispur Mahaprabhu was annoyed and said to the cow, 'How will men get three meals a day? You will have to help them. Your calves will get them grain while they are alive, and will give them meat when they are dead.'

Deer

46

KOYA

Phulimetla, Koraput District

There was a hill called Morimahua where a Gour and his wife made their home. They lived on fruit and the roots of the jungle. One day Deur and his wife, riding on a she-goat, came to that hill and went to the Gour's hut. The Gour gave his visitors broad green leaves to sit on and washed their feet with honey. They were pleased and decided to give the Gour their she-goat. When they gave it to him, they said, 'Look after it carefully: it will have many children and be most useful to you.'

The she-goat lived in the house and gave three kids at once. This happened six times. But at the seventh time there were only two kids, one male, one female.

Now there was a herd of goats and it took the Gour's son all his time to graze them. One day, the little goats wandered off into the jungle. The boy came home with the rest of the herd. Next day the Gour went to get the missing kids but could find no trace of them. Six months later the Gour's son went for wood and there he found two goats grazing. He tried to bring them home, but they would not come near him. He went home and they remained in the forest and became barking-deer.

47

KUTTIA KOND

Pikesa, Ganjam District

It was Rani-aru who at the beginning taught the Konds to

offer buffalo-sacrifice. They used to eat the flesh and the Paiks and Gonds, seeing this, longed to eat it too. They went to Rani-aru and said, 'Look, the Konds eat flesh; why should not we? Otherwise what can we eat?' Rani-aru said, 'Go away now; I'll get you some meat.'

They went away and Rani-aru thought, 'Where will I get food for all these people?' She brought some wax from Tikawali Hill and made a model of a sambhar with four wooden legs and entrails of *kosa* silk. But she forgot to give it horns. She let it go in the jungle, 'Live here,' she said, 'and multiply. When twenty or twenty-five men come together they'll kill you and eat your flesh.'

Then Rani-aru called the Paiks and Gonds back and said, 'Go to Nachikeri Hill and you will find a sambhar there. Kill it with your arrows and take its flesh home and distribute it to all and feast on it.' They went to the jungle where there were now many sambhar. They got one and ate its flesh.

In those days the hare had horns. The hare and sambhar became friends; one day they went to bathe together in a stream. The hare took off its horns and put them on a stone while it washed its head. The sambhar finished its bath quickly, got out and put the horns on its own head and ran to the forest. When the hare protested, it drove it away.

48

HILL SAORA

Talasingi, Ganjam District

Once human beings and domestic animals had horns, and wild animals had not. One day a Saora of Undrasingi collected the unmarried boys and girls and took them to dance at Kordel village. The girls of Kordel met them and they all danced together. The Undrasingi people had taken a buffalo with them; they killed it and when they were weary of dancing they feasted on the flesh, washing it down with draughts of palm wine.

One of the Undrasingi boys fell in love with a Kordel girl. He went to her house and they shut the door and lay together. But the other boys discovered they were missing and came in

search of them. When they discovered them, the boy tried to get away, and in his hurry he caught his horns in the door and wrenched them off.

In such ways as this people gradually knocked their horns off and the wild animals got them instead. The sambhar wore men's horns; the barking-deer got women's. This is one of the reasons why men go bald.

Dogs

49

BHUNJIA

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

When Mother Parvati sent her tiger to frighten Father Mahadeo home, he made wild dogs which drove it away. It was so frightened that it ran straight to Parvati's kitchen and hid there. The wild dogs followed and looked into the vessels and searched the hearth, rubbing soot all over their bodies as they did so. When they went back to the jungle they saw how dirty they were and rubbed the soot off onto the trunk of an ebony tree, which has ever since been black. But the dogs did not see their own faces and so they did not clean them, and they have remained black to this day.

50

BONDO

Goyiguda, Koraput District

The bull and the dog were friends. But one day the dog seduced the cow. The bull caught them and said, 'My friend, you are working very hard, let us exchange our parts so that you may have greater strength.' The dog at first refused but at last agreed, and the two friends exchanged their parts. Then the bull said, 'Now you will be able to do well but only at certain times.'

One day when the bull was cooking rice the dog stole it. The bull was hurt and wept because it was its friend who had stolen its rice. It cursed the dog saying, 'Whenever you meet anyone you will have to bark.'

So the friendship between the two came to an end. The bull went to eat grass in the jungle and the dog spends its time stealing food.[1]

51

BONDO

Kirsanipada, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu was ploughing in his field. His mother and sister were cooking gruel on the bank nearby; when it was ready the old mother sent the girl with it to him. Before she went the mother put a fruit in the girl's hand and said, 'Don't eat this fruit whatever happens, but take it to Mahaprabhu.' This happened every day, but one day Mahaprabhu was ploughing a long way off and as the girl was carrying him his food she felt hungry and ate the fruit, whereupon she went mad, and with hair dishevelled and eyes wild and terrified ran back home. Her mother abused her and beat her with her broom. The girl turned into a dog and the broom became her tail.[2]

52

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

Seven Gadaba brothers and their sister lived together. The brothers arranged a youth to serve for the girl. The brothers

[1] Dogs were kept as pets in India as far back as Mohenjo-daro. Throughout Orissa and adjoining areas, they are treated with affection. Cain relates that even Brahmins in the Godaveri District (neighbouring Koraput) pay respect to the dog during a woman's pregnancy. A bitch is marked with saffron, and the expectant mother makes an obeisance and feeds it with curry and rice. A Brahmin who killed a dog many years ago built a temple, made an image of a dog, and daily worshipped it.—J. Cain, in *The Indian Antiquary*, Vol. IV (1875), pp. 196f. The tribesmen treat their dogs well, feed them with their own food and weep when they die. A Kuttia Kond will cover the corpse with cloth and carry it out to burial. I once saw a small menhir erected by a Maria for a favourite dog. The Konds castrate dogs, believing that this makes them better hunters. Dogs are used by all the tribesmen in hunting, to guard forest clearings and to protect their houses.

[2] For another story of a girl who turns into a dog with a broom-tail, see story 66 of this chapter.

were great hunters and went daily to hunt in the forest, but the boy and the girl used to stay together at home.

One day the brothers said to the youth, 'Every day we go out and get you meat; now today you go out and get us meat.' The boy told his wife, and she prepared some gruel for him and put it in a gourd. He slung the gourd on an axe over his shoulder and taking his bow and arrows went to the forest. Before long he saw a barking-deer and fired at it. But as he fired, he himself tripped and fell over. The deer was wounded and ran away. When the boy fell, the gourd fell to the ground and turned into a dog. The dog chased the deer and caught it. When the boy got up, he could not find his gourd anywhere but he saw the dog holding the deer. He ran after it, killed the deer, put it on his shoulder and started for home. The dog ran ahead and got home first. When the girl saw the dog, she was frightened, for she thought that her husband had been killed and that this strange creature had come to tell her about it. But soon afterwards the boy arrived, and they kept the dog as a pet in the house.

53

JHORIA

Sukku, Koraput District

In the days when dogs had no tails they could run very fast and were so strong that they could kill a tiger.

An old widow and her son had a well-stocked farm of cattle—pigs, goats and chickens. At night they tied a dog outside the gate and thieves were so afraid of its barking that they did not come anywhere near the house.

The dog and her son were great friends and were always playing together. When the boy grew up, he married and brought his wife to his house. One day the girl went home to see her mother, and after a little while the boy decided to go and fetch her back. As he was getting ready to go, the dog said, 'Big brother, where are you going?' 'To my wife's father's house.' 'Then I will go with you,' said the dog.

When they were approaching the village where the girl was,

the dog said to the boy, 'Big brother, you have a tail hanging from your loin-cloth in front and behind. But I have no tail and people laugh at me. Do give me your back tail.' The boy cut off the back flap of his loin-cloth and the dog put it on and began to wag it proudly. When the people of that village saw what the boy had done, they all cut off the flaps of their loin-cloths and gave them to their dogs.

After a few days the boy took his wife home and that night he tied the dog outside the house as usual. Presently a tiger came by; the dog smelt it and barked furiously. The tiger said to itself, 'Does this dog really see me when it barks. I must find out.' The tiger approached the dog very carefully and began to talk to it. 'What is this?' asked the tiger, touching the dog's ear. 'It is my ear,' said the dog. 'And this?' asked the tiger, touching its nose. 'It is my nose,' said the dog. 'And this?' asked the tiger, touching its mouth. 'It is my mouth,' said the dog. 'And this?' asked the tiger, touching its organ. 'It is my organ,' said the dog.

Now the tiger was very frightened of the tail, for it thought that it was a gun or a sword. Very cautiously it touched the tail and said, 'What is this?' preparing to run away at once if the dog said it was a gun or a sword. 'It is my tail,' said the dog. At that the tiger seized the dog and carried it away and ate it.

If we want to make a dog run fast, we cut off its tail. It then becomes a good hunter.

54

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

There was an old shaman and his blind wife. The shaman sowed large millet in his clearing. When the crop was ready, he reaped it and prepared the threshing-floor. His wife came to help and one day she was sitting on the floor beating the pile of millet with a stick. Presently she got tired and sat quietly in the sun. A dog came up behind her and licked her back. The blind woman was frightened; she threw some of the ears of millet at

the dog and cried '*Chu-re*'. One of the ears stuck in the dog's backside and it ran away yelping '*Kai-kai*'.

After it had run a little way, the dog met Mother Thakurani. She said, 'What is the matter?' The dog said, 'I licked the old woman's back in all friendliness, but she abused me and threw ears of millet at me, and look, one of them has stuck in my backside. Please take it out for me.' Thakurani said, 'Certainly not. It looks extremely nice there. In fact I will make it into a tail, and then it will be useful too.'

That is why the tail of the dog is a little crooked, like an ear of large millet.

55

JHORIA

Pittayigaon, Koraput District

There was an elderly shaman and his wife. They had no children and had to do all their work themselves. The shaman prepared his clearing in the forest and sowed pulse in it. Monkeys were always robbing the field and the shaman had to spend a lot of time guarding it against them.

One day there was a sacrifice in the village and the shaman had to be there. His wife went to the clearing instead, carrying with her a little food and a gourd of water. When she reached the place she found a lot of monkeys eating the pulse. She threw her gourd at them crying, '*Chu-chu*'. The gourd turned into a dog and, barking loudly, chased the monkeys away.

56

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

One day Father Mahadeo was very drunk. He staggered to a newly-burnt pyre and covered himself with ashes. Then he mounted his bull and went careering along the road. Mother Parvati went ahead. A dog saw Mahadeo and began to bark. When it recognized Mahadeo it barked. Parvati called laughingly

to the dog, 'There goes your Fate.' The dog was frightened at that and curled its tail up and barked all the more.

The dog's master asked, 'What are you making such a noise for?' The dog said, 'My Fate is on the road. I've made my tail into a noose and I'm calling him to come and be caught.' But the dog's master said, 'You excreta-dropping dog, you'll never be able to catch your Fate. It's your Fate that will catch you.' And he caught the dog's tail and twisted it saying, 'Don't make such a noise.'

But the dog was now frightened that its Fate would catch it and it went on barking all the more. This is how the dog began to bark.

57

KOND

Bondri, Koraput District

Apanakuri-Mamunakuri was a dog belonging to Paramugatti and Mangragatti. One day they took it with them to hunt. So passed seven days. They got no food. Paramugatti and Mangragatti said to the dog, 'Go and ask your mother for some rice.' The dog approached the house and cried, '*Bhu-bhu*', and came back. They said, 'Why didn't you bring any rice?' 'She refused to give me any,' said the dog.

Paramugatti and Mangragatti made their way home, drinking water, resting, walking, resting, walking. When he got home Paramugatti wanted to beat his wife: she asked him why. 'For not sending rice when I sent the dog.' She said, 'It came, it is true, but it said nothing about rice, it just sat there crying "*Bhu-bhu*".' Paramugatti was angry and told the dog, 'From today "*Bhu-bhu*" is all you'll be able to say.'

The dog said, 'Tie a thread to my ear and I'll run it round the village and then if any animal or man treads on it, I'll bark.

58

KUTTIA KOND

Pikesa, Ganjam District

When Nirantali taught the Konds how to make their clearings

in the forest they sowed their large and small millets. But when the harvest was ready, monkeys used to come and steal it and caused great loss to the people.

One day the Konds collected and went to Nirantali and begged her, 'Give us a watchman.' Nirantali gave them a dog and said to it, 'Go and live with men and drive animals away from their clearings.' The dog could not bark in those days and could only chase animals away: this made it very tired. So Nirantali told it to make some sort of noise so that it need not run about so much. The dog tried but could only make a sort of breathing noise, *soh-soh*. Nirantali then cut a hollow bamboo and put it down the dog's throat into its belly and blew down it and it sounded *bonr-bonr*.

Now the dog was able to bark and drove the monkeys away without having to chase them.

59

KUTTIA KOND

Kujka, Ganjam District

One day while Nirantali was busy in the house, Paramugatti went to cut his clearing in the jungle. He made a wild dog out of the shavings from his axe-shaft and sent it home. Nirantali was cleaning a pot when the dog rushed at her but she caught it by the mouth and with her dirty hands made its face black.

Nirantali in turn made a tiger and sent it to Paramugatti but he said to the dog, 'Go and eat this tiger.' The dog chased the tiger away; it ran round in front of it and pissed on a stone and the tiger went blind and the dog was able to kill and eat it.

Formerly dogs used to eat men. They were very dangerous and men thought they would all be killed. But Ururengan spun some silk and swallowed it, and sat outside his house pulling the thread out of his mouth. The dog came to eat him but Ururengan said, 'I'm so hungry I'm pulling out my own entrails to eat.' The dog was frightened and ran away and after that gave up eating men.

60

MURIA

Chitabera, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu had a dog and its bitch. Whenever anyone came to the house, the dog did not bark but sat quietly.

One day Mahaprahbu came home at midday; after eating his dinner he lay with his wife. A visitor came and before anyone noticed him walked into the house and disturbed the couple. Mahaprabhu got up in great embarrassment. The visitor, also embarrassed, talked a little and went away. Mahaprabhu then beat his dog very hard and said, 'Whenever anyone comes, you let them in and do nothing to stop them.' The dog said, 'I was afraid you would be angry.'

Mahaprabhu gave an order that if anything—bird, animal, man or woman—approached the house, the dog was to make a noise; and if they tried to come in, it was to stop them. 'Only when I say "Let them in", may they come,' said Mahaprabhu.

This was how Mahaprabhu taught the dog to bark.

61

PARENGA

Dumriput, Koraput District

One day three brothers went with their carrying-poles to get grain from another village. They started rather late and night fell before they had reached their destination. They made their camp in the jungle; two of them busied themselves fetching wood and preparing a fire, but the youngest sat doing nothing. The others were annoyed with him and said, 'You never do any work. This time we're not going to let you sit by the fire.' They made a good fire, but kept the youngest brother away from it, and during the night he died of cold.

When they saw what had happened, the brothers said, 'After all he was our brother,' and they burnt his body and performed the rites properly. They went on to the village, got their grain and returned the same way. When they came to the place where they had burnt the body, they saw a dog sitting in the ashes.

It ran to them and licked their feet. One of them said, 'This must be our brother,' and he said to the dog, 'Come home with us.' They went on their way and the dog followed them home.

This is why we never eat the dog, and why dogs love to sit among the ashes of a fire.

62

PARENGA

Rupodai, Koraput District

An old man and woman had five sons and a little daughter. They loved the girl so much that to keep her in the house they employed a boy to serve for her. One day the five sons said to the boy, 'Today you go alone to work on the threshing-floor; we are going to hunt.' 'Very well,' said the boy and went alone to the threshing-floor.

At midday the girl put food in a pot and took it to the boy. When he saw her, he said to himself, 'I have been here a long time now, yet I have never known my wife. We are all alone today; now is the time for it.' He took the girl among the piles of chaff, but like a dog and a bitch they stuck together. They were unable to separate.

In the evening the five brothers returned from the forest. The eldest went ahead and saw the two lovers lying together on the threshing-floor. They all coughed to warn them that they should separate, but they could not. The eldest brother was very angry at their shamelessness, and he took his bow and fired an arrow at the boy. But he missed him and hit the girl instead and killed her. As she died, her lover was freed, and he got up and told the brothers what had happened.

They carried the body into the forest and made a pyre. As the flames leapt up, the boy sprang onto the pyre and was burnt with his bride. The brothers went home and told their parents that the boy and their sister had run away to another village. The parents went weeping to find them. They came to the place where the bodies had been burnt, and there they saw two stumps like tails sticking out of the ashes. They pulled at them and there came out a dog and a bitch. They

took them home and cared for them as if they were their own children.

63

PENGU

Kelar, Koraput District

There was a goddess named Dammi who had a lovely little daughter. When the girl grew up Dammi went to find her a husband. She found seven brothers, all unmarried, living on Andhramati Hill. She said to herself, 'Here are seven brothers but I really don't know which of them should marry my daughter.' So she took them all home with her and said to the girl, 'Here are seven brothers. Marry the one you like best.'

The girl chose the youngest brother and they took her to her new home. She used to do the cooking while the men went to their fields. One day there was a lot of work to be done and the brothers asked the girl to bring their food to the field. As she was taking it, she had to pass through a dense patch of jungle and she was frightened and began to cry. Dammi heard her crying and hurried to see what was the matter. The girl said, 'I'm crying because I'm lonely.' Dammi said, 'Give me that gourd of water and turn your back.' When the girl was not looking, Dammi said to the gourd, 'Follow, tailless one, follow behind, behind.' The gourd turned into a dog and it kept the girl company through the jungle. Dammi disappeared.

64

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

In the old days all living creatures used to live together, and talked with one another. But gradually most of the animals went away into the jungle. Between the wild and the house animals, however, there was still friendship, and when the wild animals visited a village the house animals would receive them hospitably and make them sit in their verandas and have something to eat.

Now in the jungle the grass-eating animals had plenty, but the tigers and panthers got very little and grew hungrier and hungrier. At last one night a panther came to a village. A dog had come out of the house and was sleeping on the veranda. The panther sat down beside it. The dog thought it was just another dog and let it be. But when the dog fell asleep the panther picked it up and carried it off into the jungle. On the way the dog woke up but realizing what was happening remained very quiet.

The panther put the dog down under a tree and went off to find a twig to clean its teeth. The dog jumped up and ran away, away to Kittung. When Kittung heard what had happened he said, 'Whenever an animal that you don't know comes from another village, before you have anything to do with it, take a sniff at its backside. It will do the same to you and if the smell is of turmeric you will be able to recognize whether you are of the same caste or no. If the animal won't let you do it, you will know that it is dangerous and you must run away at once.' Ever since dogs have done this.

65

HILL SAORA

Liabo, Ganjam District

Every creature had hands and feet, teeth and nails and tail, except the dog which had no tail. The other animals laughed at it and the dog got very annoyed, thinking that its lack of a tail made it look ugly. At last it ran away to the jungle and hid there.

One day when Kittung was wandering through the jungle, he met the dog. The dog said, 'What are you doing here?' Kittung said, 'I came to find you.' The dog said, 'You made my body well enough, but you forgot the tail and so everyone laughs at me and people don't let me sit with them.'

Kittung brought the dog to a village and found a garden where a Saora had planted many gourd vines. He picked a gourd and breaking off the handle fixed it on the dog's bottom and said, 'Here is your tail. Hide it between your legs and go to your

village and when people laugh at you bring it out and wag it and it is they who will be ashamed.'

66

HILL SAORA

Padangpanga, Ganjam District

Ramma and Bimma had a daughter. This girl used to work in their clearing and took them food daily. On the way there was Kittung. The girl was very beautiful and Kittung wanted to marry her. He said, 'Come to me.' but she was frightened and ran away. Every day he called her, but she refused to go to him. But at last one day he met her on the way and forced her. After it was over, he said, 'Now we have done this, will you marry me or not?' She again refused. Kittung put medicine in her mouth and said, 'Very well, you will go mad: become a dog.' The girl ran barking on all fours to Ramma and Bimma. They beat her with a broom and she turned into a dog with a tail like a broom.

Elephants

67

GOND

Banuaguda, Koraput District

Paklu Gond had no field or garden: he had to go daily for the roots on which he lived. One day as he was searching for roots he came to Sarguguda village. When he returned home he thought, 'Let us too make fields; it is very troublesome always to be digging roots.' He made a field near the jungle and sowed rice, but when it grew, wild animals came and destroyed it. To keep them away he made scarecrows of grass.

One day Paklu made a great grass animal, using a gourd for the head and its long handle as a nose, and blackened it: for ears he put fans. When the animals saw the great creature they ran away.

One day Mahaprabhu and his wife came by and when the wife

saw the elephant she asked, 'Whatever is this? What an alarming sight!' Mahaprabhu went ahead, but his wife remained behind saying, 'We must look at this.' So he came back and his wife said, 'What a fine creature! If only it were alive what fun it would be to ride on it!'

Mahaprabhu put life in the scarecrow and he and his wife rode home on it. But when they had gone some way the Gond and his wife came to their field and saw their elephant was gone. They searched for it, following its footmarks. When they saw Mahaprabhu they shouted, 'There are the thieves who've taken our elephant.' They caught Mahaprabhu and his wife, not realizing who they were, and abused them. Mahaprabhu said, 'Let whose it is catch and take it.' They gave it to the Gond and his wife but the elephant ran into the jungle and the Gond could not catch it.

68

KUTTIA KOND

Bilaisarda, Ganjam District

Elephants at first were just like dogs. So no one took any notice of them, no one was afraid of them; people used to beat and abuse and drive them about as they pleased.

One day when an elephant had been very badly treated, it went weeping to Nirantali and said, 'You've made me so small that no one takes any notice of me.' Nirantali said, 'I can't do anything; go to Bura Pinnu.'

The elephant went to Bura Pinnu. Bura Pinnu sat on its back and taught it how to behave, how to eat, drink, walk and couple. When he was satisfied, he made it very big and said, 'Now go to the jungle and eat what you will. If any Raja catches you, go with him and learn what he teaches.'

This is why the elephant ruins the Kond's crops, for it remembers how badly it was treated when it was small.

69

KUTTIA KOND

Rangaparu, Ganjam District

The elephant originally was a man with a long nose and big ears, an enormous organ and great buttocks. As he went along his organ swung *ludung-ludung* to and fro. This man was a cannibal: he did not care for any other meat.

After he had devoured a great many people, the survivors went to Nirantali and said, 'This man eats us, small and great. None of us will be left before long.' Nirantali thought in her mind, then she called the cannibal and said, 'I'll give you a very sweet fruit.' He took it eagerly, but it was a bitter fruit which drove him mad and he ran into the jungle and turned into an elephant.

70

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

In Saphaganna Nirantali cut a sago palm to make an elephant. With the wood she made the back and bones; for legs she cut four other palms. She got iron spikes from the Bindrabari Lohar for nails. For ears, she used the leaves of the palm. For tusks she used the long peduncles from which liquor is drawn. She prepared cord from the fibre for the trunk. Then she put wind in the belly and life came to it. She took it to Golpara Hill and let it wander there.

71

HILL SAORA

Talasingi, Ganjam District

One day, when Ramma and Bimma were ruling the world, they summoned all the Chiefs and landlords to their court. The visitors dressed up in their best clothes and came riding to court, some on deer, some on tigers, some on peacocks.

On Kapatominjra Hill lived Budra Saora who was the Chief

of his village. He had no proper clothes and nothing to ride on. His wife did not like this. She told him to cut down a *bija* tree and carve it into the shape of a great animal. She rubbed a lot of dirt off her body, mixed it with water and rubbed it all over the creature and it became flesh and skin. She cut her hair and wove it into a rope and fixed it on the front of the animal as its trunk. She used winnowing-fans for the ears. When it was ready she called Kittung Mahapurub and he laid his hand on its back and life came into it. Budra then rode to court on its back, and Ramma and Bimma gave him a turban with the others and told him that he might keep his elephant.

72

HILL SAORA

Liabo, Ganjam District

In the old days elephants had four great wings. Kittung used to ride on one of them. But after the world was made and men began to live on the earth, the elephants became a nuisance. They crowed like cocks and flew up into the sky; when they were tired they came down and perched on the roofs of houses. They were so heavy that the houses collapsed beneath them.[1]

When Kittung heard of this he was annoyed. In those days the peacock had no tail. One day Kittung invited the elephants to a feast. The great creatures filled their bellies and lay down to sleep. While they were asleep, Kittung cut off their wings. Two of them he gave to the peacock and that is how the peacock got its tail. The other two he stuck on the plantain tree, which accounts for its great leaves.

When the elephants woke up and found they had lost their wings, they were very angry; they ran away into the jungle and ever since have been the enemies of men.

[1] For an account of the very old tradition of the flying elephants, see MMI, pp. 203f. and 218f.

Foxes

73

HILL SAORA

Gailung, Koraput District

The Chief of the Saoras living on Barkun Hill was named Kumma. He had two daughters and a son. The elder daughter and son were married, but not the younger daughter. The elder daughter went to her father-in-law's house and the others lived at home. After a time, the boy's wife fell in love with another youth; this went on for a long time before the husband discovered it. He was very angry and beat her so hard that she ran away to her mother's house. On the way, she felt hungry and found a wild fig and ate it. Her husband followed in search of her and when she saw him coming she looked wildly for somewhere to hide. There was nothing but a hole in the ground: she went down into that and cried to Kittung, 'Take my soul: he'll kill me.'

Kittung heard the cry of the woman and changed the form of her body into that of a fox. She cried '*Hu-hu*' as foxes cry today. The husband saw the fox: he followed it but it escaped.

Goats

74

HILL SAORA

Mannemgolu, Koraput District

A Saora and his wife lived on Ranjadongar. He was the shaman and she the shamanin of the place. They went to Pirhaldongar and made clearings on the hillside and sowed every kind of seed. But when the crop was ready, the god of that hill would not let them approach to cut it. Whenever they went near, he sent a tiger, bear or snake to injure them.

So the shaman went to find Kittung on the Mahendra Mountain and told him his trouble. Kittung said, 'Give the god a she-goat to eat.' The shaman had never seen a goat

and though he searched everywhere there was not one to be found. Then Kittung himself went; he searched on the star Sukua. On the star a she-goat had two children. Kittung fell at Sukua's feet and said, 'Let me take your children home for fifteen days and then I'll return them.' He was thus able to take the mother and the little goats away and sent them to the Saora's house. The Saora wénт to the god of the hill and said, 'These goats are very small now: let them grow and you'll get a good meal next year. Don't have them killed now.' The god agreed and the Saora reaped his crop. He hid the mother and sacrificed the little ones at the end of the year.

HARES[1]

75

BONDO

Pakhnaguda, Koraput District

Long ago the hare said, 'I never will go to water. I'll never drink it, unless it comes itself to my feet.' But one day it was very thirsty and went to drink. Mahaprabhu said, 'When you yourself have made a rule about it, why do you go to drink?' He was angry and turned the hare into a toad.

76

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

On Ranisoru mountain lived Bura Pinnu's sister Pusuruli. One day her brother went to see her. Pusuruli called him into her house and fed him. He stayed fifteen days. When it was time to go, Pusuruli prepared food for his journey and Bura Pinnu set out. After he had gone, Pusuruli looked for a broom to clean the house. The broom was twelve years old and very broken. When she saw it, she decided to throw it away and get a new one from her brother. She threw the old stump away and

[1] For a Kuttia Kond story of how the hare lost its horns, see story 47 of this chapter.

it turned into a hare and Pusuruli said, 'As a broom goes darting here and there, so you dance and jump about.' The hare began to jump and dance.

Horses[1]

77

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

The sambhar is the horse of Dongar Deota. From a certain country came a Raja; he had the jungle cleared and a bungalow built. When Dongar Deota heard of it, he was angry that his territory had been invaded and came to fight the Raja. During the battle, the Raja injured the foot of Dongar Deota and made him lame. He said to Mahaprabhu, 'This Raja has injured my foot; who will guard my garden, the forest? I have many animals in it. Some one may come and steal them.'

Mahaprabhu cut down a plantain and made a sambhar; he gave it horns of *dhaman* wood. 'Here is a horse for you,' he said. 'You can ride round your garden on it and see that everything is all right.' Dongar Deota mounted the sambhar and rode home on it.

Nowadays, whenever we go hunting, we sacrifice to Dongar Deota. On the days when the god is out riding, we are never able to kill a sambhar. We can only get one when Dongar Deota turns his 'horse' out to graze.

78

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

There were two brothers. The elder was a great drunkard. He drank so much that he could not distinguish between cooked

[1] It is taboo for a Gadaba to touch a horse, and if he does so he is excommunicated and has to give a penalty feast. For the Gadabas, like all the tribesmen were tricked through a horse, when the younger brother in the very popular story (ch. XIX, 4; ch. XXIX, 6 and 8) mounted it, and rode away to become a Raja.

food and raw or between night and day, for he slept all day; he did no work and he never took a bath. The younger brother did not drink at all; he worked hard, saluted Ispur Mahaprabhu daily and was always bathing.

This naturally annoyed the elder man and he used to beat and abuse his younger brother whenever he could. 'You don't do any real work,' he would say. 'All you can do is to bathe and salute Ispur Mahaprabhu. Go and get me some liquor.'

The five Mahaprabhus saw this and were angry. 'The elder brother is a rascal,' they said. 'We ought not to eat his offerings. The younger is a good man and we should help him.'

So the five Mahaprabhus cut down a *bija* tree and made a horse. They said to it, 'Go to the brothers' house.' When it saw the two men, it neighed loudly and ran towards them. The elder brother, who was very drunk, saw it coming and hid himself, thinking that it was some sort of Asur which wanted to devour him. But the younger brother caught it and, mounted on its back, rode away to become a king.

79

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

Nirantali sent Paramugatti to get some bees-wax to make a horse and he brought some from Golpara Hill. Nirantali made the horse's head first, then the eyes with burning coals and gave it four wooden legs. She put bits of wood as bones on the back and stuck the whole thing together with wax. She used *siāri* cord for the entrails which she stuffed into the belly and *siāri* leaves for the liver. A broom of feathery reeds served as tail. She swept up a little dust from the floor and blew it into the mouth and life came to it. She gave the horse to Batul Saheb and he rode away on its back.

Hyenas

80

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

In Onchaguda lived three Kommar brothers. The eldest was very mean. Whenever there was any food left, he used to keep it till it went bad and only then would give it away. As a result everyone disliked him and no one invited him to eat or drink with them. He had two sons and a daughter, but he refused to pay for the wedding ceremonies and his children had to remain unmarried.

When this tiresome Kommar grew old and died, the widow and children performed his funerary rites. His soul went to Rumrok and said, 'Whatever gift you have for me, give it to me now.' But Rumrok said, 'Go! And as you fed others on rotten food, so you will have rotten corpses as your food and you will live hiding in dried-up streams. The Kommar's soul returned to earth as the first hyena.

Jackals [1]

81

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

Long ago there lived a Saora priest whose name was Roda Jani. He was so clever that he was called by the people of many villages to sacrifice on their behalf. In due time, he fell ill and died. At his funeral ceremonies the people buried an egg in the place where his ashes were. But this was the only thing Roda's ghost got to eat for many years.

At last he grew so hungry that he went to Kittung and said, 'All my life I was a great meat-eater, but now for twelve years I have had no meat or liquor, but just one egg buried with my ashes. Give me another birth where I will get plenty of meat.' Kittung said, 'Go to the forest; find a cave under a rock; go

in and sleep there.' The ghost went to Karelang Hill and found such a cave and took up his lodging there. Presently Kittung sent him to be reborn as a jackal. Kittung said to the jackal, 'When the people are out in their hill-clearings, creep into the deserted villages and steal their fowls. In that way you will always have plenty of meat.'

Monkeys

82

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

At first when Mahaprabhu sent Rajas, the Government, and the Sahibs to rule over mankind, people lived peacefully, because they were afraid of the police. But the animals were afraid of no one and they used to kill and eat each other.

When Mahaprabhu saw what was going on, he decided that it was because the animals had no officials to keep them in order. With the dirt of his right arm he made a red monkey which was called the Sahib monkey, and from the dirt of his left arm he made a big black-faced monkey. From the dust of his foot he made a wild dog. He appointed the red monkey as the Sahib-Raja and made its body and its buttocks red as a Sahib's face. He called the big monkey the Police, and the dog the Reserve Police. Then he called all the animals to him and said, 'Here is your Raja, your Police and your Reserve Police. If you do any mischief they will certainly punish you and the Reserve Police will shoot you.'

This is how monkeys were first made and this is why all animals fear the wild dog and when monkeys see a tiger, they chatter as their way of making a report to the police.

83

BONDO

Mundlipada, Koraput District

At the beginning, when the earth and the clouds were made,

men and animals could talk to each other and they often became great friends. A certain man, for example, had a special monkey friend and the two of them went everywhere together. One day as they were going through the jungle, they saw some honey up in a tree. The Bondo climbed up, but the bees stung him and he came down in a hurry. He said to the monkey, 'Friend, you go up the tree this time. I'll cut off some of the skin from your buttocks and hang it on the tree. When the bees see it they will sit on it to drink the blood and they'll leave you alone and you'll be able to get the honey.' The monkey agreed and the Bondo cut off a big piece of skin and hung it to the tree. The bees swarmed over it to drink the blood and the monkey went up and began to remove the honey. But when the bees had finished the blood they flew back to the hive and found the monkey robbing them and a lot of fresh blood on his buttocks. They began to sting the bare and bleeding buttocks and in pain the monkey jumped and fell to the ground. The Bondo ran away, and the monkey followed as best it could.

The next day the monkey took its sore bottom to Mahaprabhu and told him what had happened. Mahaprabhu cured it and turned the skin red. But since then men and monkeys have not been quite such good friends as they were before.

84

BONDO

Andrahal, Koraput District

In the old days men had no hair. A man was working in his clearing; he spent night and day there. In the jungle near at hand was a monkey and its wife. The man was lonely and he made friends with the monkey; it used to bring him presents of honey, roots and nuts. At night the man used to creep up to the monkey's house and watch it enjoying its wife. The man had no woman and as he watched he felt as if he was being fried over a fire. One day the monkey fell ill and the man thought, 'I'll go with this monkey-girl to fetch food for us both.' He went to the monkey and said, 'Friend, I do wish I had a little honey. But you're ill; how can we get some?' The monkey answered,

'Friend, take my wife with you. She will show you where it is. But you won't be able to get it as you are, for the bees won't recognize you and will be afraid.' So the monkey gave the man its beard and moustaches to wear.

Away the two went into the jungle and after they had gone some way the man caught hold of the monkey and tried to enjoy her. But he was too big for her and when he had entered her he found his organ caught. However hard he tried he could not free himself. It grew late and the monkey at home became anxious, fearing that the bees had stung his friend to death. With great difficulty it got up and hobbled slowly along the path. The man saw it approaching and was very frightened. With a mighty pull he freed himself and out came the monkey's vulva along with his own organ; the monkey's hairs stuck to him and ever since man has had hairs in that part. The man ran away to his clearing and hid there. The monkey found its wife bleeding and unable to walk; it cured her with herbs and they decided to kill the man and take back their hair. They went to the clearing but when they threatened the man he picked up a burning log and thrust it in their faces. Since then monkeys have had black faces and red bottoms, and men have had hair on their bodies.

Now this monkey-girl was pregnant and in due time gave birth to a human child. The two monkeys took him to the man and he adopted him.

Some time later the monkey went to the man's sister's house and said, 'My friend is ill and has sent me to call you. Come quickly.' The woman left the house and went with the monkey through the forest. There the monkey took his revenge and his hairs stuck to her and that is why today women have hairs in that part.

85

GADABA

Challanguda, Koraput District

Twelve boys and twelve girls lived in a certain village. They were crazy about dancing. One evening, while they were dancing, a monkey dressed in a coat and turban came and sat on a stone

near by. It had a fiddle and played it so well that no one realized it was a monkey and the girls danced their best. This happened night after night, and soon all the girls were in love with the monkey which played so beautifully. One girl gave it a ring, another brought it food, a third refreshed it with rice-beer.

The boys naturally did not like this. They said to each other, 'Nobody seems to know this fellow; where does he come from? Who is he?' One night they watched it very carefully. The monkey's tail stuck out behind, and up till then they had all thought it was a stick that it was carrying. But that night the boys saw what it was. 'It's only a monkey,' they whispered. They did nothing then, but went on with the dance as usual, and when it was over they went to their dormitory and the monkey went to its tree. But next day the boys put wood round the stone where the monkey always sat and set fire to it, and when it was very hot they cleaned it and sat down and began to sing. Presently along came the monkey with its fiddle and sat down as usual on its stone. The skin of its buttocks was burnt off and it ran away screaming with pain. The boys never stopped laughing at the girls who had given a monkey a ring, and food, and rice-beer, and ever since the monkey has had red buttocks.

86

GOND

Chacharaguda, Koraput District

There was a Gond and his wife who lived in a certain village. They were poor and had no fields. They had to work as servants in the houses of their neighbours. The wife found this very tiresome and one day she said to her husband, 'Let us at least make a small clearing and work in it.' So they left their village and went to the hill called Pendu where they cut the forest and burnt the wood. While the husband was engaged in burning the wood, his wife went to bring his food. But she was very slow about it and the husband climbed up one of the trees which was still standing, though it was burnt by the fire. When he came down his hands were black with the charred wood; he rubbed his eyes and face and they too became black. He tied the rake, with

which he had been scattering ashes over his field, to his behind and he then climbed up the tree again and shouted to his wife. But as he went on shouting his voice changed into a monkey's voice and the rake changed into a tail and he became a monkey. His wife ran to the place with his food, but when she saw what had happened she jumped into the fire and became black all over and thus she too turned into a monkey.

87

GOND

Gumma, Ganjam District

There were two sisters, very beautiful, both unmarried. They lived at home with their old parents. One year, when the time came for reaping the crop in the forest-clearings, a monkey came to steal. The old man built a hut in the clearing and sent his daughters at night to keep watch. One evening the girls saw the monkey pick a cucumber and go off with it, but they did nothing, so the next night the monkey came again. This time the girls chased it, but when it saw how beautiful they were it thought, 'I'll catch them and carry them off myself.' It jumped back into the clearing, picked up the elder girl and ran away with her. The younger sister followed weeping.

The monkey took them to its house and said, 'Look, this is your house and door; live here and eat.' Now that monkey was very rich; there was gold and silver in the house and many cows and buffaloes in the shed. When the girls saw this, they said to each other. 'This is a wealthy monkey; let us live and eat here.' The monkey gave them many presents, every kind of gold and silver ornament and silk cloth for their bodies. So five months passed. Then one night the monkey approached the elder girl and climbed upon her and lay on her breast. But she kicked him away and he fell sprawling on the ground. The girls now said to each other, 'It is not safe to live with this monkey; let us kill it and take its wealth to our parents.'

The next day the monkey went to collect food in the forest and the girls cooked some rice and milk with tamarind juice. As they ate their food they let a little fall on the ground. Presently

the monkey came home and sat down in a corner. Some of the food on the floor stuck to its buttocks. It felt wet and cold and it rubbed the place and pulled out the hairs that were growing there. Next day the girls again cooked the same food and again scattered some of it on the floor. This time the monkey got it smeared all over his backside and it felt quite chilly. It cried, 'Come here you two girls and clean me.' The girls said, 'How can we? You've got such a lot of hair that it's always picking up the dirt. Why not burn it off, and then you'll be nice and clean.' It said, 'Well, heat a digging-stick and burn off the hair with that.' The girls, pleased and excited, made a big fire and put the iron-pointed stick in to heat; when it was red-hot they said, 'Now lie down on your face.' The monkey lay down and the younger girl caught hold of its legs and the elder burnt off a little hair and then thrust the digging-stick right up its backside to its head and the poor creature died.

The girls took the gold and silver and the silken cloth for their bodies with the cows and buffaloes to their parents. They were soon married now and went to live with their husbands.

88

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

A man and his wife sowed pulse in their clearing, and when the crop was ripening they sent their daughter to watch it, for many monkeys used to come and steal. She drove them away day after day, until at last one of the monkeys decided to make friends with her. It used to bring honey and fruit and put it by her side as she lay asleep. She was very pleased at this and one night she only pretended to be asleep, for she wanted to find out who her admirer was. When the monkey came she sat up and caught it by the hand. 'Why are you doing all this for me?' she asked. 'Because,' replied the monkey, 'I am sure you must be very hungry; I never see you eating anything.' In return the girl plucked some of the pulse and roasted it herself, and after that she used to feed the monkey every day.

When the crop was gathered and the girl no longer had any

excuse for going to the forest, the monkey began to visit her at home. There was a stone near the house where it would sit and the girl would go and see it there. But there was a boy in the village who was in love with the girl and he got very jealous of the monkey. One day he made the stone very hot just before the monkey came, and when it sat on it the skin was burnt off its backside and it ran away crying.[1]

89

KUTTIA KOND

Karanja, Ganjam District

There was a brother and a sister. They lived by cutting the forest and sowing their seed. When the sister went out the brother stayed in the house; when the brother went out, the sister stayed in the house. The girl grew mature and thought, 'My brother is small, but I am grown. How am I to marry? I am too shy to ask my brother.' Thinking in this way she went daily to the forest and wept there.

There was a big monkey, a monkey with a black face and white whiskers: it used to come daily to steal food from the clearing. One day it heard the girl crying and went near her. 'Why are you crying?' it said. 'Tell me.' She replied, 'Can you put my sorrow far from me?' The monkey said, 'Tell me what is the matter and I'll do what I can. Otherwise I'll go away.' The girl said, 'My brother is small and I am mature; how can I tell him to arrange my marriage? There is no village near.' The monkey said, 'No need to cry; I'll marry you myself.' The girl said, 'You are a monkey. I may lie with you, it is true, but what food will you give me?' The monkey said, 'I'll steal from every clearing for you.' The girl said, 'Very well.' She went with the monkey. Every day it stole for her. She lived and ate with the monkey. In time there was something in the belly. When the brother saw the belly big, he said, 'What's the matter with your belly?' 'It's nothing; it's just a swelling.' But every day the boy said, 'What swelling is this? Look, it's getting bigger.' One day he followed her to the forest-clearing and saw her eating

[1] Compare the Gadaba story, No. 85 of this chapter.

and coupling with the monkey. Next day he said, 'Girl, you stay home today; I'll go to the clearing.' He dressed as a girl in her cloth and ornaments and took food to the clearing. He sang as his sister sang to call the monkey, and the monkey answered, '*Hu-hu*'. But when it leapt down, it saw at once that this was not its wife, and ran away. The boy waited a long time and then went home. The next day he came with his bow and arrow and hid among the trees. The monkey thought, 'This man will come again', and went cautiously to the field-hut to see if he was there. But the boy shot and killed it.

The boy went home. The next day he sent the girl out. 'Go, girl, to the clearing.' She sang to her lover but he did not reply. As she sat weeping a fly came and buzzed *bhun-bhun-bhun* before her face; she caught it and it said, 'Don't kill me; tell me what you are crying for.' It led her to the monkey's corpse. A Dom came by; he picked it up and ate it. The girl went home. The brother said, 'Why are you crying? You've been lying to me. You've gone and married a monkey. Why didn't you ask me for a good boy to be your husband?' Then he thought and said, 'But never mind; we'll go on living together. Even if it's a dog, never mind; if it's a monkey, never mind. Once the thing is born, I'll get you a husband.'

When the time came, the girl gave birth to a monkey. When she saw it she thought, 'I'll never get a good boy with this,' so she strangled it. The brother said, 'Why did you kill it?' She said, 'It was born dead.' The boy said, 'Who will wash your clothes?' The girl said, 'I'll wash them myself.' The boy said, 'No, you're too weak.' He took the blood-stained clothes to the stream and washed them crying, 'A girl has had a little monkey; *pichri-pichri* I'm washing her pubic cloth.' The koel flew down and the boy said, 'O koel, tell my parents about this,' and he went home.

Since then the Konds have never eaten monkey-flesh, for it is our elder sister's husband.

90

PARENGA

Tetlipada, Koraput District

Marding Deota lived with his wife and daughter on Kog Hill. One year he divided the millet crop into three parts, and reaped them separately and made three separate threshing-floors, for his wife, his daughter and himself. When they had finished threshing, they found that Marding Deota himself had very little grain, his wife had a medium amount of grain, and his daughter had a very large quantity of grain.

The reason for this was that the girl had made a monkey scarecrow with a bundle of millet straw tied round with a bit of her own cloth and some of her own hair on its head.

Soon afterwards, Ispur Mahaprabhu came to the girl in a dream and said, 'You got a great deal of grain this year, because your monkey protected it and none dared to come and steal it. But now you must make it alive; if you don't all your grain will be stolen.' When she awoke the girl tried to make the scarecrow alive, but whatever she did nothing happened. She got thin and anxious and could not eat her food. Then Thakurani came to her and said, 'Don't worry; eat your food. I will tell you what to do. When you next have your period, take a few drops of the blood and put it on the monkey's head and it will become alive.'

After a few days the girl's period began and she put a few drops of blood on the monkey's head and it immediately became alive. This is why we still make monkey scarecrows in our hill clearings.

91

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

Men were born first, then monkeys. Kittung's sister had a son and wherever Kittung went he took the boy with him. One day Kittung said to Sima Rani, 'I want a wife for my nephew.' She said that she would do what she could. After some time, Kittung sent the boy alone to her, saying, 'Go and see if she is there or not. If she is, I'll come to her.'

The boy found Sima Rani, dressed like a Saora, lying asleep. He saw her thing and liked it. He desired to have intercourse. He sat before her and tried to thrust her legs apart. But she awoke and caught him and went running with him to Kittung crying, 'Look what a rascal your nephew is.'

Kittung was angry at this. He cut off the boy's hair-lock; he blackened his face and made his body rough and hairy. He tied a rope round his neck and hung him from a tree. In this way the boy turned into a monkey and Kittung said to him, 'The Saoras will eat you whenever they get a chance, and even the smallest bit of iron will kill you. Because you have been made in this way, the Saoras will stuff your bodies with straw and hang them up in their villages to drive away ghosts and demons.'[1]

92

HILL SAORA

Potta, Koraput District

A tiger and a monkey were friends and lived together. They used to go out together for their food; the tiger killed any animals it could find and the monkey climbed the trees and brought down fruit and honey. After a time the tiger married and went to live in a separate house. One day the tiger saw honey in a tree; it told the monkey and the monkey brought it down and took it to the tiger's house, then it went to the nearest stream to bathe.

In its absence the tiger and its wife ate the honey. When the monkey came back the tiger said, 'It was my wife who ate it.' The monkey was annoyed but it did not say anything. It went hungry all day and said to itself, 'Some day I'll spoil their food and then they can go hungry.'

A few days later, the tiger got a sambhar and brought the liver home. The tiger and its wife went to bathe. In their absence, the monkey came in and began to relieve itself over the food. But as it was doing so, the tiger and its wife returned. Just outside, the tiger coughed and when the monkey heard it, it was

[1] The Saoras often stuff a monkey with straw, put a pipe in its mouth and a stick in its hand, and set it on a pole at the entrance to a village to keep away the demons of disease.

so frightened that it fell over and the blood from the liver got all over its backside. The tigers came in and found excreta on their dinner; they were very angry and attacked their friend.

The monkey ran away and as it went rubbed itself against the trees in order to get rid of the blood. But all that happened was that its own skin came off and since that time the monkey's backside has been red.

Pigs

93

GADABA

Onumal, Koraput District

A shaman and his wife had a son born to them, even though they were old. After the child's birth, Landijaker Deota came to the village and said to the shaman, 'I have come to your village. Give me somewhere to stay and a pig to eat.' The Jani replied, 'Many people like you come to my village. How can I feed everyone? And I've never even heard of a pig.' And he drove the god away with curses.

That night Landijaker Deota came again, this time in a dream. 'Give me somewhere to stay,' he said, 'and I want a pig to eat.' He caught hold of the shaman by the throat and began to throttle him. The shaman gurgled and gasped and threw his arms about. His wife woke him up, and said, 'Whatever is the matter?' The shaman said, 'There is a god called Landijaker Deota. He wants a house and a pig. We can make him a house tomorrow, but what is a pig?'

Next morning the shaman did not feel so frightened, and he did nothing about his dream. That evening his baby son died. During the night he himself fell ill with bloody motions. Landijaker Deota now came to the old woman in a dream and said, 'I asked your husband for a house to live in and a pig to eat. I am very hungry and I can't get anything to eat. So I have devoured your son and unless you do something, I will destroy your husband also.' The woman got up in the dark and went out weeping in search of a pig.

At cockcrow the old woman found Mahaprabhu. He was just going out into the fields to relieve himself. She fell at his feet and wept. Mahaprabhu said, 'Go and sit in my house. I'll finish my business and come back and attend to yours.' Mahaprabhu went into the fields and as he was squatting there, he thought, 'What can I do for this poor woman?' He took some earth, mixed it with his urine and made a pig. He pulled out some of his pubic hairs and stuck them in its body to serve as bristles. The pig came to life and said, 'I am hungry. What am I to eat?' Mahaprabhu said, 'Eat anything you see.' There was nothing there but Mahaprabhu's excreta and the pig ate that. Mahaprabhu took the pig to his house and gave it to the shaman's wife.

94

JHORIA

Sukku, Koraput District

One day the headman of a village near Phurga Hill fell very ill. His sister called the shaman. Jhaker Deota came upon the shaman and demanded a pig in sacrifice. They did not know what a pig was and the girl went in despair to try and find one. She came to a house where an old woman had set out a row of gourds to dry. She stood near them and pissed on the ground. A few drops of her urine splashed onto the gourds and they turned into pigs. The girl took one of them home and they sacrificed it to Jhaker Deota.

95

KOYA

Sikapalli, Koraput District

There was a village called Barlaguda which had only Koya families living there. One Buddhiya was the Chief. He had five sons, all married; three had children.

Every night a jackal came and stole chickens; the villagers tried very hard to kill it. One day when they were eating the First Fruits of Pulses, the Chief called his son's father-in-law to drink

some liquor with the neighbours. As the visitor entered the village, the jackal was running off with a chicken in its mouth and, unable to pass, it turned back into the village. The visitor shouted to the people and the drinkers got up and chased the jackal. They drove it down the street and the Chief's youngest son hit it with a stone and knocked it over. He hit it again with another stone and the two stones knocked against each other. The jackal died and the two stones turned into two little pigs. The neighbours said, 'Let us take these home and look after them.'

96

KUTTIA KOND

Deovalli, Ganjam District

There was an orphan boy. He was very poor. He had no food or cloth. He lived near his village, sleeping in a pit. In the morning he used to wander round searching for food, but all he got was excreta. One day Nirantali saw the boy and asked him why he was eating such horrible stuff. When he told her, she went into the village and asked why they did not look after the boy. They said, 'Well, there is no one to clear up our excreta and if he wants to eat it, it suits us very well.' Nirantali gave the boy the fruit of madness and, when he had eaten it, he turned into a pig. Nirantali said, 'Now men and gods will both be pleased with you, for your work is useful to the world.'

97

HILL SAORA

Kerubai, Koraput District

Kittung lived on Ongera Hill. He had a pig. He fed it on the best food, built it a fine clean house and gave it a cot to sleep on. He never let it wander about. One day he gave it rice and pulse and some nice ripe plantains. After eating, the pig went out.

One of the neighbours, Ningla Saora, had gone to relieve himself and was sitting on the edge of a field. The pig wondered

what the man was doing and when he went away it went to see. It found a bit of ground damp with urine and a lump of excreta near by. The pig thought, 'Evidently this Saora was eating his food, but couldn't finish it and has left it for me.' So it began to eat the excreta and enjoyed it.

As it was eating. Kittung came in search of it. He was very angry and beat it, but he could not stop it eating. Kittung said, 'From today you can live on this dirt: you will get no food from me.' After that pigs have had to eat excreta for otherwise they would get very hungry.

98

HILL SAORA

Guli Ganjam District

At first women ate every kind of meat. For there was a shamanin who used to sacrifice pigs to the gods and eat the flesh; then she would go to another house and sacrifice a buffalo and eat the flesh, and then in another house she would eat a fowl. But when she began to sacrifice to the Dead she broke wind loudly and everyone laughed and said, 'What a smell! Whatever has she been eating?' A crowd quickly gathered, laughing and joking, but the Dead were angry and went away. After that the Dead said women should not eat pork, for the smell of their wind was too strong afterwards.

99

HILL SAORA

Gailung, Koraput District

Sima Rani called all the animals to meet her in the sky; she told one to eat flesh, one leaves, one grass. She also called men. There was an Asur. It was an enormous eater: in a single day it would finish off five seers of rice and two seers of pulse. This Asur was a pig. It was the last to reach Sima Rani. It cried, 'Ah, give me something to eat,' for it wanted to devour Sima Rani herself. She had given food to all the other animals and men, but there was nothing left for the Asur. She thought,

'What can I give him?' She said, 'You'd better eat the excreta of men. There will be lots of it and you can fill your belly every morning.' The Asur said, 'But if I eat excreta, my flesh will not taste sweet and no one will eat with me or keep me in his house.' But Sima Rani said, 'No, on the contrary, your flesh will be the tastiest of all and everyone will want to eat it.'

Porcupines

100

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

The Lohars had an iron pit on Bongaldei Hill. But one year the iron failed and however deep they dug they could not get a single lump of ore. They went home disconsolate and called a shaman to discover where the trouble lay. When the god came upon him he declared, 'For three years you have neglected me, so why should I do anything for you.'

The Lohars at once sacrificed a pig and ate and drank in honour of the god. That very day they found ore and took it home. But they left the pig's head behind. Baman Dei shouted after them to take it away, but they took no notice and so the god took the head and decided to turn it into a new kind of animal. He put sticks for legs and made a body of clay. Into the clay he stuck a lot of thorns. He told the creature that it would be a porcupine and that if anyone attacked it, it should shake itself and the thorns would fly out and drive away its enemy.

101

DIDAYI

Amliwada, Koraput District

In Minakiput lived a Didayi called Budha Sisa. He was a well-known shaman and visited many villages to divine the cause of disease and offer sacrifice. He had three sons and five daughters and of these one son and two of the daughters were married. Budha Sisa arranged the marriage of his second son, but Da-

Kittung attacked the boy and made him very ill. Budha divined the cause of the trouble and Da-Kittung spoke through him, saying, 'Offer me sacrifice and I'll let your son go; otherwise I'll take him away with me.' 'What do you want?' asked the father. 'Give me a pig,' said Da-Kittung. 'I won't accept anything else.' But Budha had not got a pig and no money to buy one, so he went to Sajangor village and stole one from Lachan Dom.

On the third day after this, Budha arranged to sacrifice the pig. He had made the first offerings of rice and liquor and was engaged in feeding the pig before killing it, when Lachan Dom arrived in search of it. Budha was frightened and tried to hide the pig, but it struggled so much that there was no way of concealing it. So he took some thin bamboo sticks and said to Da-Kittung, 'Let these grow out of the pig's back and change its legs so that they will be something like a man's.' As he spoke the sticks turned into quills growing from the pig's back and its legs changed, though the snout remained.

Lachan Dom said to Budha, 'Did you steal my pig?' 'No,' said Budha. 'I have never seen your pig. As you can see, I am sacrificing a porcupine.' Lachan looked at the creature and went away grumbling.

But Da-Kittung said, 'This creature is no good to me. You must give me something else.' Budha somehow or other got hold of a white cock and sacrificed that instead and he let the porcupine go in the forest.

102

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

There was an old Gadaba woman living on Borandi Hill. She had a very pretty daughter. One day the twelve Gadaba brothers came hunting through the forest. They saw the girl and seized her, thinking that she would make one of them a good wife. The girl screamed and the old mother ran out of the house, her broom in hand, to rescue her. She threw the broom at the twelve brothers and it turned into a porcupine and drove them away.

The porcupine returned to the old woman and she said to it, 'Go to the forest, live and eat.'[1]

Rats

103

BONDO

Goyiguda, Koraput District

Men had no fire; they sought it in the hills. They found a clump of dry bamboos; in one of them lived a rat. It said, 'If you'll get me out of this, I'll show you how to make fire.' The Bondo cut the bamboo and the rat came out and showed them how to rub one bamboo across another till fire came. Then as the Bondo were carrying their fire home, the rat said, 'I'll come with you;' and it went to live with them in their village. After a little time there was a festival and the Bondo said to each other, 'What can we sacrifice?' The rat said, 'You've plenty of children, far too many of them. Sacrifice one of them and the gods and the Dead will be pleased.' They thought his advice good and killed a fine boy.[2] They cooked and ate the flesh and gave some of it to the rat.

But when it sat down to eat, it could hardly swallow the food for laughing. 'What are you laughing at?' asked the Bondos. 'Because you are such simpletons: I told you to kill your own child and you obeyed me, a rat,' and it laughed again. This made the Bondos so angry that they killed it on the spot and swore that henceforth they would killl rats and offer them at their festivals.

[1] Porcupine quills are used by Gadabas and Didayis in weaving. Gadaba men go for a special porcupine hunt in June, shortly before the monsoon. When they have trapped or shot an animal, they remove the quills and roast and eat the flesh on the spot. The flesh is said to be very sweet, 'for a porcupine never drinks from a stream, but gets all its water from a little bag in its own backside'.

[2] Cf. the Saora story, No. 107 of this chapter.

104

BONDO

Datipada, Koraput District

A Bondo Raja and a Raja of the rat tribe were great friends. But the rat fell in love with the Bondo Raja's wife and wondered how he might possess her. There was a war and the Bondo Raja was called by the Nandpur Raja to go and fight. Before he went he planted a flowering shrub in the presence of his wife and his rat friend saying, 'If this withers it will mean that I am dead.' After the Raja had gone away, the rat dug a hole from its house to the garden and bit through the roots of the shrub and it died. Then the rat came to the Rani and said, 'Your husband is dead; it will be no sin to lie with me.' In those days the rat had a long organ and the Bondo a small one. So he enjoyed her. But the Raja came home. He found the Rani and the rat sitting together and his shrub withered. He dug it up and saw the marks of the rat's teeth on the root. So he caught the rat and cut off its long organ and stuck it on his own body.

Since then women have eaten rats with pleasure, for they feel they are taking revenge for the way they were once deceived.

105

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

A Dom merchant had every kind of grain in his store. Men went to get seed from him, but he refused to share his plenty and said, 'I am a poor man; I have nothing in my house.' He hurriedly put all his grain in gourds and buried them. Meanwhile the neighbours were dying of hunger.

Ispur Mahaprabhu said to himself, 'I sent a lot of grain to the Middle World; why are the people dying of hunger?' He took the form of an old man and came to the headman's house. 'I am very hungry,' he said, 'and in my house are two little daughters who are dying for want of food.' The headman gave him wood and water and some roots to eat. 'We have no grain'

he said. 'We are living nowadays on roots. The Dom has all the grain in the world and he will not give us any of it.'

Ispur Mahaprabhu took the roots in his hand and went to the Dom's house. He asked the Dom for grain. The Dom replied, 'I have no grain in my store; come and see.' Ispur Mahaprabhu went in and saw the empty grain-bins, but he knew where the grain was buried. He threw the roots on the ground and said, 'Go and bring me the grain.' The roots turned into rats and they burrowed down to where the gourds were hidden and brought out the seed grain by grain.[1]

106

PARENGA

Rajubidai, Koraput District

A Dom merchant had an only son called Bhimol. This boy had a penis that was a whole cubit long. He grew up and married. But when he went to his wife, he killed her. Then he married another girl, and another, and another. But they all died as a result of his terrible penis. After this the poor boy could not get any girl to marry him. He searched everywhere for a wife until he wearied, but no one would have him.

There was a very poor Dom with a large family. It was so large and they were so poor that there was never enough food in the house. One day the Dom went out to beg for something to eat and he came to the rich merchant's house. The merchant said, 'Give one of your daughters to my son, and I'll give you all the grain you want.' The poor Dom agreed and one of his daughters was married to Bhimol.

The girl had heard about the other wives and was very much afraid that she would be killed as they had been. When they retired for the night, she asked her husband for some liquor. He brought it and, pretending to drink with him, she made him take so much that he passed out. 'Now,' she said to herself. 'I'll see what the matter is.' She undid Bhimol's clothes and saw the great organ. She measured a span and cut off the rest and threw it away.

[1] This story is also told by the Gadabas.

The bit she cut off fell to the ground, but jumped up and crying '*Chu-chu*', ran into a hole. This was the first rat and it was as dirty as the thing it came from.

107

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

A band of Saoras went out to hunt, but though they searched all day they got nothing and, weary and disgusted, they sat down beneath a clump of bamboos. Among the bamboos was a rat which cried, '*Chi-chi-chi-chi*'. The Saoras said, 'Who is that crying?' The rat said, 'I am a rat; cut down the bamboos and let me out.' The Saoras, thinking that they had found some game at last, cut down the bamboos, but when the rat came out they decided not to kill it but to keep it as a pet.

Some time afterwards there was a festival in that village, and everyone brought offerings of rice and liquor. But there was one man who, though he had a large family, had no goats or fowls. 'What offering can I bring?' he said. The rat said, 'Why not give one of your many children?' The man agreed and sacrificed his youngest son. After the sacrifice the people said, 'What shall we do with the body?' The rat said, 'What! Aren't you going to eat the body?' The rat said, 'Give the body to me.' In the end the rat got the body and chuckling to itself dragged it away and ate it.

When the mother heard what had happened she followed the rat weeping and drove it away and buried the little body. She returned home and cursed her husband until he lost his temper, and killed the rat. The mother said, 'It devoured the flesh of our son, so let us in revenge devour its flesh.'

Since then the Saoras have eaten rats.

Tigers

108

BONDO

Gokurapada, Koraput District

The tiger was formerly a man. He went mad and bit people and scratched them. Mahaprabhu came and with a hot sickle drew lines over his body and drove him into the jungle where he became a tiger.

109

BONDO

Paknaguda, Koraput District

When men first walked they used to swing their arms and the tiger followed thinking, 'If they swing their arms like that, sooner or later they'll fall off and I'll be able to eat them.' But the arms did not come off, however much they swung and the tiger grew hungrier and hungrier.

A kite was eating a fowl and the tiger asked it, 'What are you eating? Give me a bit; I'm dying of hunger.' The kite said, 'You're as great as Mahaprabhu; how can you beg from me?' The tiger said, 'What can I do? How do you get food?' 'Watch me,' said the kite. The tiger hid and watched the kite fly over the village and swoop down on a fowl. It said, 'You do like that.' Since then the tiger has jumped on man as the kite swoops down on a fowl.

110

BONDO

Basupada, Koraput District

There was a Bondo Raja. He had a daughter. One day he said, 'Whoever can sleep naked out in the frost all night may have her.' Many Rajas came, lay in the cold for an hour or two, then gave up. The Bondo Raja chased them away with

many blows. Then a Brahmin came. He failed to pass the test. Then a naked ascetic came. He slept comfortably all night in the frost. The very next morning the marriage was celebrated. In time a son and a daughter were born. They grew up and lay together as man and wife. Soon they loved each other greatly. One day their father saw them and in a rage beat them and drove them away. As they went, they turned into tigers. They were covered with stripes like the ash on the sadhu's body.

III

GADABA

Surgunnaput, Koraput District

Long ago there was a Bondo and his wife. The Bondo used to go every day to his clearings in the forest, and there he worked and often he took too much palm-wine and did not go home. When this happened, his wife used to say, 'What does he eat that keeps him so long away in the forest?' She decided to go and see. But as she was about to go, she thought, 'How can I go by myself?' She took some millet flour and made a small model of a tiger. She tied a bit of her pubic cloth round it and ate it. This made her pregnant and when her time came she gave birth to a tiger-cub.

The woman said, 'Now I will go with my son to find my husband.' They went together to the clearing, but when they got there, they saw no sign of anyone. The woman said to the tiger-cub, 'Go and find him.' It searched and searched until it came to a sago palm, and there was the Bondo lying drunk at its foot. The tiger went back to the woman and told her what it had seen. She went to the palm and saw her husband lying drunk. She thought, 'If I wake him, he may kill me in a rage.' So she put gruel at his feet and went home.

After a time, the Bondo recovered and sat up and saw the gruel. He thought, 'It's a long time since I had any of this. Who can have brought it?' He went home and asked his wife about it. She told him all about the tiger-cub.

After a day or two, when the woman was at the stream getting water, the man thought, 'If this tiger stays in our house, it will

kill me when it gets big enough. I must get rid of it.' He took a burning log of wood from the fire and burnt the tiger and it ran away roaring with pain. The woman heard the noise and ran to rescue it. But the tiger said, 'I'm not going to live in your house any longer. I'm going to the jungle. But from today do not any longer wear a pubic cloth. If you do I shall eat you.'

To this day Bondo women do not wear the pubic cloth.

112

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

Dongar Dai lived on a hill called Beneng. She was very old. At first the hill was covered with thick jungle, but gradually as the villagers in the neighbourhood cut their clearings and removed leaves and firewood to their homes, the forest grew thin.

When she saw this Dongar Dai thought, 'I am old now and these people are ruining my home. Soon there will be nothing left, and then where shall I live? I have no son or daughter to care for me. Somehow I must stop these people coming to my hill.'

She made a little model tiger with millet flour, and covered it with stripes by burning plantain leaves. When it was ready she said, 'Go, son, and devour those who would spoil my home.' The tiger became alive and filled its belly with the wood-cutters.

113

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

There was a certain shaman living near Barkal Hill who had an only son of whom he was very fond. The boy was married and one day he took his wife to cut wood on the hillside. They came to a great rock and a clump of bamboos growing before it. The boy cut one of the bamboos, for he wanted to make a fiddle.

The girl said, 'There are gods here; don't cut anything.' But he took no notice and cut the bamboo. As he did so a tiger sprang upon him. There had been no tigers in the world before this and the girl did not know what it was. She tried to save her husband but the tiger knocked her down; she lost her senses and blood flowed from her mouth. When she recovered she saw no tiger and no husband. She went home crying.

The shaman said, 'Where is my son?' The girl said, 'A tiger has eaten him. The shaman was angry at once. 'I have never heard of this "tiger" before. There is no such creature. You are a witch and you have eaten him yourself.' He picked up a knife and tried to kill the poor girl. She escaped and ran back to the hill, where she hid under the rock. But the shaman followed her and caught her. He killed her by the rock, and from her blood grew a great *bija* tree. Five tigers lived in its branches.

114

KOYA

Dudimetla, Koraput District

There was a village where many Koyas lived. The Chief had a daughter. When she grew up her father wondered how to get her married to the right kind of youth. Many came for her, but he refused them. 'I'll only give her to a youth who will be willing to live with us and work for his bride.' So said the Chief.

One day the Chief went to another village to find a youth, but no one was prepared to accept the conditions, so he returned. As he was going home, night fell and he took refuge in a wayside village. In a little hut on the outskirts lived an old woman and her son. The Chief went there and asked for shelter. He ate his supper and lay down. The old woman asked where he was going and why. He told her. She said, 'Take us.' The Chief liked the boy and married his daughter to him.

The boy and girl lived together. One day they went to the forest for firewood. They tied up the wood in bundles. As they were about to return, they remembered they had also to get leaves. For these they went deeper into the jungle and the boy left his axe on the bundle of wood. As they were picking the

leaves, Deur passed by and seeing the wood wondered whose it was. He decided to frighten the owner. He cut his little finger and let some blood fall on the axe and it turned into a tiger. Deur gave it a kick on its behind and went away to hide. When the boy and girl returned with their leaves, the tiger began to roar and the boy and girl threw down the leaves and ran away screaming. The tiger chased them, but did them no harm and when they got home it returned to the forest and started the race of tigers.

115

KOND

Demili, Ganjam District

When the animals ran away from Sitahoru Pinnu and news of it came to Bura Pinnu, he was very annoyed and decided to make a tiger to take revenge on them. He made a mud image and stuck bits of grass in its paws for nails and made stripes with red and black earth. He put it in his house and after three days life came to it and it began to roar. He said, 'Go to Bonger-Soru Hill and there you will find deer. Catch and eat them.'

116

KUTTIA KOND

Sachenda, Ganjam District

There were two friends living in a village; they both had wives. One wife had a child in her belly: the other had two sons and two daughters growing up. The husband of the pregnant girl went to another village. The other man went to bathe in a stream. When he had thrown water over himself, he got some *kerela* vegetable and took it home and cooked it. They all ate it. The pregnant girl saw them eating and said, 'Why don't you give me some?' They said, 'The children have finished it.'

That night the pregnant girl's face swelled up and when her husband came back he was anxious and said, 'Why are you ill?'. She did not answer. But when he pressed her, she said, 'Your friend

cooked some vegetables and wouldn't give me any. I had to swallow the water in my mouth and so my face is swollen.' So she said to her husband. He went to his friend and asked, 'Why didn't you give the vegetable to your friend?' 'The children had eaten it all.' The husband said to his wife, 'I'll go and find some *kerela* for you.' He went along the path his friend had taken, then along by the river, searching. At last he found the *kerela,* in a place where a tiger had planted a garden. He had picked a little when the tiger saw him and tried to kill him. But the man told his story. The tiger said, 'Well, if the child is a girl, give her to me: if it is a boy it will be yours.' 'Yes,' said the man and went home. He cooked the *kerela* and the pregnant girl ate it and recovered. She said, 'Where did you get the *kerela*?' The man said nothing. But after a time he told the story. The woman was frightened and abused her husband.

After some time a girl child was born. The tiger heard of it and came near to see whether a girl or a boy had been born. It came to the house. Then every day it brought grain and meat for its daughter. After two years the woman had another child, a boy. The two children grew up together. When the girl was mature, the tiger said, 'I'll take her now.' They said, 'Go and hide by the stream; then when she goes for water, you can seize her and carry her off.' They killed a fowl and prepared grain and said to the girl, 'Today they are coming to betroth you; eat well and go to bathe.' 'Yes,' she said and went to the river with her pot. The little brother wanted to follow: the parents tried to stop him, but he ran away and they said, 'Well, go and die. What can we do?' The tiger caught the girl and threw her on the ground. The boy drew his bow and arrow and shot the tiger and killed it. After a little while the girl got up. The boy cut off the tiger's right ear and its tail and put them in a pot, and said, 'Our parents gave you to the tiger. We won't live with them. Come, let's go to the jungle.'

After two months the ear and tail turned into two tigers inside the pot. The boy was frightened and said, 'They'll eat us.' The girl said, 'No, we four brothers and sisters will live together.' They called the tigers Sonibanni and all four went along the

road. The road passed through a jungle called Surpador. The boy saw a rat and told Sonibanni to catch it. But when they caught it, the rat said, 'Don't kill me. We five brothers and sisters will go along together.' In the jungle was an Asur which had eaten all the inhabitants. The boy went to the place to get fire and called, 'Give me a little fire.' The Asur said, '*Hu-hu-hu*". He came to the boy and gave him a love-charm and locked him in a room. The rat went to find the boy and said to the Asur, 'Give back my brother or I'll eat your lover.' The Asur showed the rat the house and the rat said to the Asur, 'You had better join us.' Soon they had made a house in the jungle. They were always going out hunting. They used to put the Asur to watch the tracks of sambhar and barking-deer and the others did the beat. The animals used to go into the Asur's belly. When he went home, he would bring them up. Those that were still living were killed by the tiger. In this way they feasted and grew fat.

There was a Raja's tank; a girl went to bathe in it. The Raja came to bathe; he caught the girl and said, 'I'll marry you.' 'I can't unless my brother, the rat, the tigers and the Asur agree.' The Raja said, 'Then go and tell your brother that you want fish. When the boy comes the fish will swallow him and you can marry me.' The girl did as he said. The boy took a trap to the lake. A great fish swallowed him. The rat, what did it do? It came to find the boy and seeing his footprints, went back to fetch the Asur saying, 'Come and drink all the water in the tank.' The Asur drank up all the water and there was an enormous fish jumping in the mud. They pulled it to the bank, cut it open and the boy came out just alive. The rat said to the Asur, 'You're a god, tell us why the fish swallowed my brother.' The Asur said, 'Because the Raja wishes to marry our sister.' The boy said, 'She was ready to kill me,' and he went home and killed her.

The girl's blood fell to the ground: a fly took some of it, fried it and ate it. The Sonibanni tigers saw what it was doing and asked, 'What was that.' The fly said it was the girl's blood. The tigers said, 'If human blood is so sweet, the flesh will be even better.' So they took the boy to the jungle and ate him.

But after that the rat, the Asur and the tigers quarrelled and decided to live separately.

117

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

One day Nirantali went back to the place where she was born and made a dog. She used to send this dog to fetch gods or men when she wanted to talk to them. Then Nirantali thought, 'I have a dog now. I'll make a tiger also and they can live together.' But she had nothing to make it with.

She found a hollow stone with a great honeycomb inside; she took out the wax, and used it to make a tiger. When it was ready she searched for a life to put in it, but she could not find one.

A bee came flying by and sat on the tiger. Nirantali caught the bee and put it into the mouth of the wax image and it crawled into its stomach. Thus the tiger got its life and began to growl. Nirantali caught it and took it to Kapantali.

When Kapantali saw it she was very pleased and tied it up with an iron chain. One day Nirantali fed the tiger but not the dog and the dog was hungry. Nirantali went somewhere, and in her absence the dog was angry with the tiger and jealous and they quarrelled. The dog jumped on the tied-up tiger and bit and scratched it. The tiger in its fright broke its iron chain and escaped. Ever since it has lived in the jungle.

118

KUTTIA KOND

Sachenda, Ganjam District

One day, when Paramugatti was out in the jungle hunting, he saw a honeycomb. He ate the honey and brought the wax home to Nirantali. She gave it to Katitali. Katitali made a model of a tiger on a plank, giving it stripes with red earth and soot from the cooking-pot.

When it became alive the tiger said, 'Where shall I go?'

Nirantali said, 'Go to the jungle and do what I say. Live on deer and hares.' This it did.

Then one day came a mosquito which had stolen some of a man's blood, biting his leg and taking it into its stomach. It sat before the fire, vomited up the blood, then fried and ate it. The tiger asked what it was doing. When it heard, it went to search for men.

There came by a big black dung-beetle and asked the tiger what it wanted. 'I'm waiting to eat man's blood.' 'How will you eat it?' 'I'll bite him and suck the blood.' 'That's no good; you must throw him down and tear him to pieces.' Then came a man and the tiger seized him and sat on him. The beetle went home and came back and laughed, 'What are you doing?' It said, 'As we make dung balls and roll them along, so drag the man to the jungle and there eat him and your belly will be full.'

The tiger considered this advice and found it good.

119

KUTTIA KOND

Charcharganna, Ganjam District

Every evening in Saphaganna Nirantali used to go for water. When she reached the river she found the water splashing over the ridge, and this gradually grew to be a little waterfall. Nirantali saw it and said, 'This is like a tiger.' When she saw it she was frightened. The hood of the falls stood up, hearing this, and became a tiger. Nirantali tried to catch it and it ran away. Since then the tiger has lived in the jungle.

120

PARENGA

Rajubidai, Koraput District

Long ago there were three brothers and their little sister. The brothers were married but, although many suitors came for the girl, she always refused them. But one day when the girl was

away at a bazaar, the brothers accepted liquor from some friends in token of her betrothal, and agreed to send her when the time came for the wedding.

In due course, the friends came for the girl, but she refused to go with them. The brothers were very angry and beat her saying, 'If you lie with a man secretly and bring dishonour on us, we will certainly kill you.' She said, 'I will never go to a man, never.'

Then came her first menstruation and she dreamt of a tiger and conceived. When her belly grew big and could not be hidden, the brothers were very angry and beat her and drove her from their house. But then they thought, 'If we let her go like this, she will wander from place to place bringing dishonour on our name.' So they took her to the forest and tied her to a *bija* tree, and left her and returned home.

After a few days the girl was delivered of a tiger-cub. It said, 'Mother, why are you tried up like this?' She told the cub how her brothers had driven her out for no fault of hers and had left her to die. The tiger bit through the cords and built a little hut for its mother. Then every day it used to go out to get meat for her to eat. It went to the house of the three brothers and killed one by one all the cattle, goats and fowls they had, and they became very poor. After they had eaten the meat, the girl and the tiger used to put the heads of the cows or goats inside their hut.

One day the brothers said, 'Let us go and see whether our sister is still alive.' They went to the place where they had tied her up and there they found a hut filled with the heads of their own cows and goats and fowls. 'How have these come here?' they asked 'My son brought them for me,' she said. 'Where is he?' 'He is asleep behind the hut.'

Suddenly the tiger woke and leapt upon the elder brother and killed him. It turned to attack the other brothers, but they fell at its feet and promised to honour it as a god.

Since that day the Parengas have honoured the tiger, and the men of the Tiger Clan never kill it.

121

HILL SAORA

Guli, Ganjam District

Before there were tigers men were not afraid of anything. They used to go freely through the jungle, even children played among the trees. Kittung thought, 'It is not good that men should not be afraid of anything, I must make some dangerous animal that will frighten them properly.' He broke up some red stones and made a model of a tiger from the dust. He made iron thorns and fixed them on the paws as nails. He made iron needles and put them as whiskers. He killed twelve buffaloes and put the blood on the body and life came into it and the tiger began to roar. In this way it got the strength of twelve buffaloes and Kittung took it to Gungu Hill and let it go. Now if any man dared to enter the jungle, he was caught and eaten. People had to stop going to the jungle and they had a lot of trouble to get sufficient wood.

Now Kittung said 'Fear causes people a lot of trouble,' so he went to the tiger and said 'Don't *always* kill men and animals, for men are planning to kill you in turn. Generally don't eat men, only sometimes.'

When men found that it was not so dangerous, they again went to the jungle, but they were always afraid.

122

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

Ramma and Sitaboi had fourteen children. The youngest was a tiger, and lame. The other sons used to go out every day to work in their fields and clearings but the youngest son stayed at home. After some time the other brothers got angry with the youngest son and gave him no food saying, 'He does no work. He is not even a human being. Why should we feed a wretched tiger?'

After this the tiger was forced to go out hunting in the jungle and he used to kill many animals and get good food every day.

much better than the food eaten by the other brothers. This annoyed the brothers and they said, 'This idle lame creature gets meat every day; we must kill him.' The tiger heard of their plan and went to hide in the jungle. When Sitaboi found him gone she cut down a *bija* tree and carved it to look like a tiger and put it in the house. The brothers came home in the evening and shot at it. Wherever their arrows stuck in the tree, the resin flowed like blood. Sitaboi pretending to be angry came out of the house and chased the brothers away.

After a few days the thirteen brothers went out to hunt in the very same jungle where the tiger-brother was hiding and one of them killed a sambhar. He blew his horn and they all collected together. The eldest brother began to count how many of them there were and when he had counted twelve the tiger-brother leapt out from behind the tree and killed the thirteenth.

Since then the Saoras have never counted above twelve.[1]

123

HILL SAORA

Telasingi, Ganjam District

Madia Kittung had thirteen sons. They used to go every day to work in their clearing on the hillside. Madia Kittung killed the brother of Kunti Kidang, the lame tiger, which was the son of Ramma. One day the tiger saw the young men working in their clearing and it said to itself, 'Madia Kittung has killed my brother, so I will kill his sons.'

The tiger hid in some bushes near the clearing and presently Madia Kittung came to the place with his thirteen sons. He made them stand in a line and began to count them. But when he had counted twelve, the tiger leapt on the thirteenth and

[1] Fawcett has a version of this story. 'One day, long ago, some Saoras were measuring grain in a field, and when they had measured 12 measures of some kind, a tiger pounced in on them and devoured them, so ever after they dare not have a numeral above 12, for fear of a tiger repeating the performance.'—Fawcett, p. 242.

carried him away. The next day the tiger returned and killed Madia Kittung also.

This is why the Saoras never count beyond twelve.

124

HILL SAORA

Potta, Koraput District

In Kinnarsing village lived Daipano the chief. He had five sons and three daughters. All were married, the girls in their husbands homes, the boys in their own. Presently the chief and his wife died. His sons did the Guar ceremony for them. One day, the wife of the eldest son went to her mother's house on a visit and stayed six months. The husband was very angry when she did not return in time and called Kinnasum, the tiger god, and said, 'Go to my wife and eat her. But if she is willing to come back, don't eat her but bring her here.'

The tiger went. That day the girl's parents had gone to their clearing and she was alone in the house. When the tiger arrived it found her cleaning the floor with white earth: it stood at the door and growled. The girl realized it had come for her. She brought out a pot of white earth and said. 'I'm coming; don't make such a noise.' They began playing with each other and the girl threw white earth over the tiger and marks appeared on its back. Then she let it take her home.

PART FOUR: MAN

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE CREATION OF MAN

1

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

When Mahaprabhu made animals and birds, the Moon and Sun did not appear. Some of the wood and clay out of which he had made them was left over and Mahaprabhu thought, 'I've taken a lot of trouble with this stuff. Let me make a human being also with it.' He made it and then said, 'Shall this be a man or a woman?' He decided to make it a man. He had just begun to make its parts when the Moon and Sun came up into the sky and the jungle cock crowed. As the light fell on the clay, it hardened and there it was only half ready.

Mahaprabhu said, 'You will be neither man nor woman, but half and half. As some rice is without seed so you will be the seedless of mankind. If your shadow[1] falls on a pregnant woman, her child too will be a eunuch.'

2

BHUNJIA

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

At the time of the war between Bhagavan and Bhimsen,[2] the whole world turned into water. There was an old man and his old woman; when they saw Bhimsen destroying everything, they got a wooden litter and made it into a boat with two decks; into the upper deck they put their son, into the lower their daughter. Then they put a twelve years' supply of food into the boat and nailed down a roof upon it.

[1] A belief in the power of a man's shadow, both to create and to affect pregnancy, is widespread among the tribes.

[2] This may be an echo of the long enmity between Bhima and Duryodhana.

When Bhagavan heard that the world had been turned into water by Bhimsen, he made twelve crows from the dirt of his body and sent them to find out what had happened. The crows flew and flew; then they saw the boat and perched upon it. Their weight made it rock to and fro and from inside the boy cried, 'What creatures are you?' The crows were frightened and flew away. Six of them were so frightened that they fell into the water and were drowned. The other six managed to get back to Bhagavan and tell him what they had seen. They said, 'All is indeed water, but some human beings survive.'

Bhagavan sent for Bhimsen and said to him, 'You told me that you had destroyed the entire world, but it is not so; there are some creatures left.' Bhimsen fetched the boat and gave it to Bhagavan.

Bhagavan said, 'Break this thing open.' Bhimsen tried to break it, but Bhagavan prevented him by his magic. Then Bhagavan tried to break it, but Bhimsen prevented him by his magic. This happened three or four times, until at last Bhimsen in a rage lifted his club and broke the boat into two pieces and the boy and girl came out. They begged Bhagavan to give them somewhere to live. Moved by pity he called the gods and said, 'Whoever can make a new world for these children to live in, can rule over it.'

Bhimsen thought in his mind, 'This boy and girl are virtuous, for when I broke the boat with my club they were not injured. If they have children, they too will be virtuous. For their sake at least the world must be remade or I will have to eat the sin of destroying it.'

So Bhimsen took dirt from his body and remade the world.

When Bhimsen had finished making the world, he went to Mahadeo and said, 'O, Mahadeo, my credit is in your hands, for I have a wager with Bhagavan. I have made the world. Now tell me what I am to do next.' Mahadeo sad, 'Go, make separate houses for the boy and the girl and let them live separately.' Mahadeo went back to the sky and Bhimsen to the world, where he made separate houses for the boy and girl.

Many days passed and during all that time the boy never once went to the girl's house, nor did the girl go to the boy's house.

When Bhimsen saw this, he went and told Mahadeo. Mahadeo said, 'Don't worry; I'll arrange things somehow.'

So that night Mahadeo took the form of a swarm of black ants and entered the girl's house and poured over the place like water. The girl was frightened and ran out of the house. But how was Mahadeo to get her into the boy's house? He took the form of a scorpion and attacked her and she cried to her brother, 'What creature is this that is frightening me?' But she did not go into the boy's house. At last, Mahadeo took the form of a cobra and raised its hood at the girl and then she was really frightened and took refuge in her brother's bed.

They slept together, and at midnight in her sleep the girl threw her leg over her brother's body, but they did nothing more than that.

So Mahadeo created the sensation of tickling and the boy and girl began to scratch and tickle each other and were soon in each other's arms and lust came between them. Presently the girl found herself pregnant and after nine months gave birth to a son. In this way, gradually, by means of the birth of sons and daughters, the world was filled with people.

3

BONDO

Goyiguda, Koraput District

After the earth had been submerged by the waters Mahaprabhu rubbed his arm and made a crow of the dirt. The crow said, 'Where shall I sit?' and he let it sit on his shoulder. As the crow flew over the water, it got very tired and said, 'Where shall I sit?' Mahaprabhu heard it and made a cotton tree for it to sit on.

As it went about, it saw a big covered basket floating on the water. Inside this were a brother and sister. The crow went back to Mahaprabhu and told him what it had seen, and he told it to go and get some earth. The crow found an earthworm and took it back to Mahaprabhu. Scratching with its nails, it brought out some earth. Mahaprabhu threw this earth in all directions and the world came into being. Mahaprabhu got the

basket and when he had opened it he found the brother and sister. He said, 'Why don't you marry?' But they said, 'How can we? We are brother and sister.' Mahaprabhu called Thakurani and she infected them both with smallpox. The girl became squint-eyed and the boy turned into a leper. When they next met, they did not recognize one another and so they married.

There were twelve sons and twelve daughters, and their race was Bondo. After them all the peoples of the world were created.

4

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

The first people to be born were Didayis—a brother and a sister—on the bank of the Machkund river. Rumrok picked them up and put them in a wooden trough of the kind in which pigs are fed. Then he flooded the whole earth with water, but the trough floated on the surface. Soon everyone on the earth was drowned and Rumrok made a new earth and the trough came to rest on the side of a hill. Rumrok woke the children up and said to the brother, 'Who is this girl? How is she related to you?' 'She is my sister,' replied the boy. Then Rumrok said to the girl, 'Who is this boy? How is he related to you?' 'He is my brother,' replied the girl. Three times Rumrok repeated his questions and each time he got the same reply. So he told them to go and live separately and they did so.

Rumrok then called the god Kinchak and told him to alter the appearance of the two children. Kinchak made the boy's face black and the girl's brown and spotted like a deer. Then Rumrok called the two to him and again asked them how they were related. They replied that they did not know each other. Then Rumrok asked the boy, 'Will you marry this girl?' 'If you wish it, I will,' replied the boy. Rumrok declared them man and wife and they began to live together.

In due time three sons were born to the couple and they grew up. One day the mother said to them, 'We have no vegetables to eat today. Go and get some.' The boys went into the jungle

but they got no vegetables. On the other hand, they found a cow and brought it home. The eldest brother killed the cow but the youngest brother lay down in a corner of the house and said he had fever and did not want to eat anything. They tried to persuade him to take a little but he refused, so the rest of the family ate the meat and enjoyed it.

When they had finished their feast the mother told the boys to ride a horse that was tethered in the yard. The eldest brother tried to get on the horse's back but failed, and he went to the jungle for some bamboos to make a ladder. The second brother tried to mount the horse and he too failed. But the youngest brother immediately jumped upon its back and rode on it round and round the house. The boy's parents tied up his bedding and got a box ready for him and some food and put it out in the yard. Meanwhile the eldest brother returned from the jungle with a load of bamboos. When he saw that the youngest brother had already succeeded in mounting the horse, he threw the bamboos away. But the youngest brother ordered him to make one of the bamboos into a carrying-stick and load it with his bedding and box. The eldest brother did so and put the stick over his shoulder. But the youngest brother wanted to test him and told him to change the load on to his other shoulder. This he was unable to do, and so the youngest brother told him to put it down on the ground. 'You don't know how to ride a horse,' he said, 'and you cannot even carry a load.' Then the youngest boy called his other brother and asked him to carry the load and to change it from one shoulder to the other and he was able to do so.

Then the parents said, 'It is our youngest boy who will be the Raja and our second boy will be his Didayi Poroja. But our eldest boy cannot do anything; he cannot carry a load or ride a horse and it is he who killed the cow, so he will be a Dom.'[1]

[1] The story of the horse is known all over Orissa, and is told of many different tribes. Cf. ch. XXIX, 6 and 8 for Kond and Koya stories.

5

KOYA

Gumka, Koraput District

When the earth sank down, not a single living creature survived. After a long while, when nothing was done to restore the world, Deur sent for Bhima and said, 'Go round all the world and see if you can find any living creature.' Bhima went all round but could find none and returned saying, 'There is no living creature left.' Deur called the gods and asked, 'How shall we make the world and who should do it?' But no one had the necessary strength.

Bhima had a daughter. She heard about the world and felt very sorry. She said nothing to anyone, but jumped down from the sky and sank under the water, right down to the Under World. There her feet hit Sesh Nang's raised hood. Sesh Nang was angry and asked who she was. She said, 'I am Bhima's daughter. The world has sunk down, and no living creature is left. I've come to ask you what to do.' Sesh Nang and the girl discussed the matter for a long time and at last Sesh Nang said, 'Go and when the world is ready, I'll raise it up on my hood.' The girl prepared to return. Sesh Nang blew with its mouth and turned her into a boar.[1] She rolled in the mud of the Under World and then came up to the surface of the water. Here was grass and weeds. She shook her body and bits of mud flew off and covered the water with a crust. The mud hardened and so the world was made.

6

KOYA

Gumka, Koraput District

Long ago there was a Koya called Dadaburka. His parents were dead and only Dadaburka and his sister were left. She was called Sukri. When they grew up, men increased in number and were always quarrelling. So Bhima thrust the world down.

[1] The boar-motif is found in Bison-horn Maria stories, to whom the Koyas are related. See MMI, pp. 31 f.

Dadaburka had a great gourd and in this he put every kind of seed and wood and fire, cattle and other animals. Finally, Dadaburka and Sukri crept in and shut the door. All other creatures were drowned. Dadaburka and Sukri lived in the gourd.

One day, when Bhima was wandering round the world, he saw the gourd floating on the water. He listened and heard the brother and sister talking inside. He thought, 'I must kill these two or there'll be men on earth again.' But when he tried to catch the gourd, it sank below the water and went down, down, down, twice twelve miles. Bhima tried to get it, but could not, so he returned to the sky.

Later, when the earth was made, the brother and sister came out onto dry land. They were both grown up now and Dadaburka said, 'I must find a girl for myself and a boy for you. From us will be a new race of men.' But they could not find anybody. Three or four times they went to search. At last they said, 'Now only we are left. How shall we have children?' The girl said, 'If it is possible, let's wash in warm water and be man and wife.' They bathed and lay together. Soon the girl was pregnant. A son was born and then many sons and daughters and thus the race of men began. The descendants of the eldest son were Koyas.

7

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

In the old days the world was as it is now and so were men. But there were seven Suns and seven Moons and these were so hot that they burnt all men and killed them and there were none left but Nirantali, Paramugatti and his wife.

One day as Paramugatti was hunting he found an egg: this was one of the testes of Bhima Pinnu. Seeing it, Paramugatti returned and said to the dog Hapanakuri Bhamunakuri, 'Go and see the egg: if it is a snake's egg or a bird's egg bring it, but if it is a man's, leave it alone.' The dog smelt it and recognized it was a man's egg and ran home without it. Paramugatti

sent many animals—an elephant, a horse, a buffalo—to bring it, but not one of them dared to touch it. One day Paramugatti was sitting on his veranda; he shot at the egg and hit it and he himself brought it home and put it in an earthen pot and closed it. So twelve nights passed and at last a girl was born inside the pot and began to cry.

Nirantali and Paramugatti opened the pot and brought the girl out and cut the cord. From the cord the frog was born. They washed the child in turmeric water and from this fish were born and the water flowed down and there was a river. Nirantali called the girl her sister's daughter. The girl grew up and took Paramugatti's cattle to graze. Presently she began to cut a clearing in the forest and from the profit bought her own cattle, vessels, ornaments. Her name was Pusurali.

One day Paramugatti went hunting and Nirantali to bathe: Paramugatti's wife and Pusurali stayed at home. Paramugatti's wife was jealous of the girl's possessions and abused her, telling her to get out of the house. 'May a tiger kill your cattle, for they're always coming into the house, breaking things, kicking things down.' The girl was very angry and went to graze the cattle in the jungle. As she went, she tore little bits from her cloth and threw them away.

Paramugatti returned from hunting and found the girl gone; he asked his wife where she was, but she did not reply. He went to find her, following the bits of cloth. When he found her, he asked the girl why she had run away. The girl replied, 'I was very unhappy, so I ran away.' She gave Paramugatti a cot to sit on, but when he sat down it broke. She said, 'You've come here full of anger.' Paramugatti said, 'How do you know that?' She said, 'I gave you the cot and it broke, when you sat down it broke. That shows you came angry.' 'Very well,' he said, 'I'll go away and return peacefully.' He went home and after a few days came again.

The girl had prepared rice-beer and a golden seat for Paramugatti. She gave them to him. After he had drunk she fed him well on rice and vegetables. Paramugatti said, 'I've finished but will you pick up and throw away my used leaf-plates?' As she did so, the gold ring on her finger fell on Paramugatti's plate.

Paramugatti saw it and threw it away, not realizing it was hers. The girl threw away the plates and as she cleaned the place, the ring tinkled and the girl picked it up pleased, washed it and was putting it on. Paramugatti said, 'O sister's daughter, you've put magic on me. If I'd eaten that ring, I'd have died.' She said, 'There's no magic in it: I'll prove it'—and she herself swallowed the ring. Paramugatti went home.

The girl became pregnant. When the time was fulfilled, she gave birth to twins—Sonaraji and Ruparaji (they are also called Sonamundi and Bakimundi). Sonaraji was a boy and Ruparaji a girl. When the children grew up, Paramugatti came to see the mother and said, 'You are living alone and virtuous in this jungle, so how and whence were these children born?' She explained and he was satisfied.

When Sonaraji and Ruparaji were big enough, they both went to get married—one to the west and the other to the east. After a long time, they met at Calcutta-Bombay, where the salt water is. From them came the human race.

8

KOND

Sikerguda, Kalahandi District

In the sky is Jaoratali. He made an image like an egg. And whoever of the dead was to be born again went into the egg.

Jaoratali would then ask the egg, 'Will you be beautiful or ugly?' The egg would say, 'Beautiful.' 'Then what will you give me?' If the egg really wished to be beautiful, it would say, 'Goats, pigs and fowls.' But if it did not care, it would say, 'What can I give?'

Jaoratali had two kinds of earth, beautiful and ugly. If anyone wished to be beautiful and answered properly, he would put it on the egg and the person would be beautiful.

9

KOND

Sikerguda, Kalahandi District

Jam Deota caused men to be born. He sat cross-legged on his seat and his face was black. He had a great iron stick over his shoulder and chains in each hand. On either side stood chaprasis. He made two eggs and said to them, 'If I make you into a man, what will you give me?' The first egg replied, 'Make me a great man and I'll give you a buffalo and many presents.' Jam Deota took the other egg and asked it the same question. This egg was a fool and it replied, 'How can I give you anything?' Jam Deota was annoyed and made it into a blind man.

10

KOND

Goludokki, Ganjam District

There was once a Kond who lived with his sister. One day this Kond took one measure of bullets and another measure of gunpowder and sat under an *irpi* tree. A barking-deer[1] came to eat the *irpi* flowers and the Kond raised his gun to shoot it. The deer said, 'Don't kill me. I have something to tell you.' The Kond lowered his gun and listened. The deer said, 'Hollow out the trunk of a bombax tree and get into it, for tomorrow the world will sink below the waters and all living creatures will die.' The Kond went home and took his sister and they hollowed out the tree and went in. They took seeds and animals and covered the opening with wax. Next day the world sank down and everything was covered with water. But the bombax tree floated on the surface, blown here and there by the wind.

After some time seven Suns and seven Moons came from Honigarh and all the water dried up. When it had dried, the Moons thought, 'It is the fault of these seven Suns that all living

[1] Cf. MMI, p. 41.

creatures have been killed.' And they plotted to destroy all but one of the Suns.

Then the Moon came to earth and brought the brother and sister out of the bombax tree and they lived as man and wife. They had seven sons and seven daughters and they married each other. Then the parents sent Dakpaji and Sujamajenja, the two elder brothers, to get *irpi* flowers. When Dakpaji picked up the *irpi* flowers he found they were gold and silver. But when Sujamajenja picked them up, he found only *irpi* flowers. When they got home, the parents made Dakpaji a Raja and Sujamajenja a Kond and the other brothers Paiks and Doms. They then lived separately and divided into different castes.

II

KOND

Denguda, Ganjam District

At first all was water. Then Bura Pinnu and Pusuruli were born at Saphaganna: they had nowhere to live, so they swam about on the surface of the water. They could find nowhere to rest their feet. At last they found a dead leaf-scorpion: its head was big as a hill. Bura Pinnu and Pusuruli climbed onto it and floated about. They thought and thought over the problem of making the earth.

They scraped off the skin of the scorpion with their nails and in seven days they spread it over the face of the water. With the scorpion's bones they made nails to fix the four corners of the world. They chopped up the flesh and scattered it as dust. The scorpion's back turned into rocks. Now the world was made and Bura Pinnu turned his mind to making animals and men. A small bit of the scorpion's bone was left and Bura Pinnu made this into a living leaf-scorpion and threw it into the water, whereupon all beings were at once created.

12

KUTTIA KOND

Kalanguda, Ganjam District

In Saphaganna, from the very place where Nirantali herself and human beings were born there emerged a man-eating bullock. At this time only half of mankind had been born; the rest were still in the earth. The bullock wandered about seeking men to eat: it was a dreadful creature—each of its teeth was long as your arm—and Nirantali wondered how to get rid of it. She drove it away three times. But it was no use, it always came back searching for men. Nirantali got very angry; she came out of her house and sat in front on a bit of wood. The bullock charged her and she hit it on the head with the wood. She hit so hard that she broke its head open and it fell back into the very pit from which it had emerged. The door broke and it stuck there in the opening.

Next day Nirantali cut off the bullock's head and threw it away; it became an ant-hill. She took out its eyes and threw them away; they became the stars. She cut out the tongue and threw it away; it became the sun. She cut off the four legs and threw them away; and they became four hills—Dalang, Barajhola, Bongera and Titrimara. She cut off the tail and threw it away; and it became the climbing *siāri* creeper. She cut off the ears and threw them away—and they became the plantain tree with its great leaves. The entrails turned into the river snake living in water. The blood turned into the Kambel River, the liver into a wet rice field. But the door remained stuck and the other half of mankind had to be born elsewhere.

13

KUTTIA KOND

Rangaparu, Ganjam District

Nirantali first made the trunk and wondered how to make the head. She made it of a *bel* fruit. In the jungle some fine grass was growing on a stone. She used this for hair. She used beans for eyes. For a nose she put the fungus that grows

under the *sarai* tree in the rains. For a tongue she put the ever-quivering pipal leaf. For ears she took a fungus growing on an old stump. For the front teeth she used cucumber seeds, for the back teeth gourd seeds. The front teeth were small and white, the back teeth large and yellow. For a moustache she brought from a stream a fine reed and blackened it with coal-dust.

She put the soft pap of a gourd for the liver and for intestines long strips cut from inside a cucumber. She used a root—the Rani's root—for the penis. For nails she took bits of a crab's carapace. With a thick dark grass she made the pubic hairs and with a bear's hair the eyelashes. When all was ready she put life into the man. He was all right, except that he could not talk properly and could not blink. If eye-flies got into his eyes he could not get rid of them. Nirantali fetched a date-palm thorn and pricked the eyes on either side and they began to blink and the man found himself able to talk. So even today men wink if they want to talk privately.

14

SAORA

Kasipalli, Sambalpur District

Raja Ruhel and his mother, these two, son and mother, lived in the sky. They were so powerful that if they heard anyone was dying they could make him live again.

One day the mother went to bathe in Kandital Lake. There was only one flight of steps and on them Risoli the Ganda was bathing. The mother asked him to give her room to bathe but he refused and she went home disappointed and cursing him. 'Let this man and all men perish,' she cried. As a result of her curse the world sank below the waters and all men and cattle were drowned. Now the world was nothing but water.

One day the Raja and his mother sat in their chariot and flew over the world. When they saw nothing but water, they decided to make a new world. The mother rubbed some dirt from her body and made a bird and sent it to find earth. It flew round the world in six months and it saw nothing but water. As it

was coming back, however, it saw a prawn; one of its whiskers was raised to heaven, the other stretched down to the Under World. The lower hair did service to Kumbir Raja, the crocodile king. The bird sat on the upper hair and the prawn said, 'Who are you? Tell me, or I'll take you to Kumbir Raja.' The bird told it and the prawn brought some virgin soil secretly from Kumbir Raja's land and gave it to the bird. The bird flew back to Raja Rahel and his mother. They put the soil in a golden pot, mixed water with it and sprinkled it to the four quarters of the world with a broom. In three days the new earth was ready, just as it had been before, and it remains till now.

Then Raja Rahel's mother brought a man and woman out of her body. They became man and wife and the race of men began.

15

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

Balingnabaru Kittung came out of the ground. Uyung Kittung[1] was in the sky. Balingnabaru Kittung was a man and Uyung Kittung a woman. They married. Their first child was a boy and was called Ramma. Later a daughter was born and was called Bimma. Then Uyung Kittung went up to the sky and Balingnabaru Kittung lived on a hill. From Ramma and Bimma all mankind has come.

16

HILL SAORA

Kittim, Koraput District

All creatures were created except man. Kittung had a daughter: he used to put her on his shoulder and take her

[1] Uyung Kittung, generally called Uyungsum, is the Sun. Balingnabaru Kittung is a local hill-god, hardly (one would have thought) worthy of the exalted role he has to fulfil. Bimma (Bhimsen) frequently appears as a woman, surely one of the oddest transformations of Hindu legend.

everywhere with him. Gradually she grew up, but her father still carried her on his shoulder.

One day while Kittung was asleep, the girl got off his shoulder and walked like a bulbul away into the fields. There she saw a bull; it followed a cow and coupled with it and went its way. Then she saw a cock: it followed a hen and coupled with it, and went its way. Then she saw a monkey; it followed a she-monkey and coupled with it and went its way. Then she saw a goat; it followed a she-goat and coupled with it and went its way. Then she saw a pig; it followed a sow and coupled with it and went its way. Then she saw a grasshopper; it followed a she-grasshopper and coupled with it and went its way.

Seeing this, the girl also desired to couple. 'But where can I find a mate?' she said. She went back to her father and stood looking at him and thought, 'If I could find a man like this then I too could couple.' She got some earth and moistened it with her spittle and made an image of her father with face, hands and feet. When it was ready with its organs, she thought, 'But how am I to make it live?'

Presently Kittung awoke and when the girl saw him getting up she hid behind the image. Kittung saw the thing his daughter had made and realized what she desired. He cut his tongue and let a few drops of the blood fall into the image's mouth. Then he went quietly away. The image came to life and got up and looked round. He saw the girl crouching on the ground near by and caught hold of her saying, 'Why did you make me?' She said, 'Because I desired to have a mate.'

They became man and woman together and from them all the human race was born.

17

HILL SAORA

Dantara, Ganjam District

Gadejangboi (who was unmarried) was husking rice when two grains went into her thing and she conceived. She was very upset over this. 'I've never had a man, so how am I pregnant? When people see me they'll laugh.' She hid the sun and moon

so that in the dark no one would see her. This darkness lasted for seven days.

In the meantime a boy and a girl were born. Gadejangboi left them and went elsewhere and the sun and moon came out again. After a time she thought, 'It was a sin to leave the children, for they may die.' She went back and found them playing together. She called the boy Ketar-raji Ketar-gumi and the girl Ajerang-diye. When they grew up, they married.

18

HILL SAORA

Kerubai, Koraput District

After the world was made, Kittung built a house for himself. On the wall he made white earth drawings of a man and woman. All living creatures, except men, were born: Kittung wanted to make men, but it was beyond his power. He went to Uyungsum, the Sun and asked what he should do. Uyungsum said, 'Cover your drawings of the man and woman with fresh green leaves. After seven days cut your little finger and let the blood fall on the drawings, two drops on the man, three on the woman.'

Kittung covered his drawings with leaves and let his blood fall on them. Nine days later from the woman's picture came a girl; she at once began to cry. Next day a boy came from the man's picture. Kittung looked after them and when they were grown up, he called Uyungsum to marry them.

From these came all mankind.

19

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

Long, long ago when the world was covered with water a gourd floated on the surface. Inside were a boy and a girl. The eyes of the two children had never opened and they could see nothing, for they had no eyes and the inside of the gourd was dark. Slowly, slowly, they matured inside the gourd. In time their bodies be-

came covered with white lice, and they began to itch and scratch themselves. Sometimes they scratched each other and in this way love grew between them and they lay together. Some of the seed fell into the water and immediately the new world came into being. Some of the seed remained in the girl and she conceived.

When the new world was made the gourd settled on the ground. In due time the girl gave birth to twins—Ramma and Bimma. When the children began to cry, the boy and the girl were frightened and threw them out of the gourd. When they did this, the gourd turned into a great stone and the boy and girl were imprisoned inside it. Now only Ramma and Bimma remained in the world.

The wind blew upon them and the two children immediately grew to maturity. Playing together they made clay elephants, horses, deer, crocodiles and all kinds of animals.

Then Ramma broke off a little bit of the rock into which the gourd had turned, ground it up, mixed it with mud and used it to make an image of a man. Then he put life into all the things that he had made.

Slowly the two brothers wandered over the world making a hill in one place, planting the jungle in another, making a man here and an animal there, until at last they returned to the great stone.

20

HILL SAORA

Ragaisingi, Ganjam District

Kittung asked his wife how to make human beings. She said, 'Dig up a little earth from seven different places and make images of men.' He got the earth and his wife said, 'I'll hide and you make four images in a day and a night, one of a Raja and Rani, one of a Poroja and Porojin. If you can't do it in time, men will not be made.'

Kittung prepared the earth and made a Raja and Rani during the day: evening came and he was still at work on the Poroja and Porojin. He finished at midnight. It was very dark. In one pot he had turmeric, in another soot: he put turmeric on the Raja and

Rani and was going to put it also on the Poroja and Porojin, but in the dark he mixed the pots and by mistake put the soot on the Poroja and Porojin. He put life into the dolls and they began to talk to him.

In the morning when the sun rose Kittung saw the Poroja and Porojin were very black. His wife was dismayed, and thought that if all men were like that it would be very bad.

But Kittung said, 'Some of your children will be light, others dark in colour. But don't worry, they won't all be dark.'

CHAPTER TWENTY

THE BODY OF MAN

1

BHATTRA

Deodhara, Koraput District

At first, in the days when people did not even know how to till their fields, men looked just like women.

In Ranipadar there was a Dom called Saolia who was very rich: he was the first to cultivate a field. For three years he sowed rice, millet and maize: in the fourth year he got wheat and made a field ten miles long and ten miles broad and sowed it. There was a fine crop and he had to call the men of ten villages to get it reaped. Even then it took them a week. One day at midday when Saolia had let them go for dinner, a Muria boy broke off an ear of wheat and stuck it on his upper lip. It turned into a moustache and ever since men have worn moustaches to distinguish them from women.

2

BHATTRA

Chetliguda, Koraput District

Once men had four legs: when they walked they tied two of them up behind and went on the other two. At that time, on Deodhara Hill there was a great cave in which lived a Muria and his wife. The Muria had a son and when he grew up he married, and husband and wife lived happily till, six months later, the youth fell ill. After fifteen days he died. When he died his parents were very angry with the girl, saying, 'If he had not married, he would not have died.' In order to drive her away, they gave her the hardest work and when they went to the fields they made her husk grain all day. She had to do one full measure with the hand-pestle every day.

But the girl secretly made a foot-pestle, using her two hind-legs as pillars, and this enabled her to finish the work quickly.

One day the parents spied on her and saw her strip herself naked and husk with her own back legs. They came in and stood before her. She was ashamed and ran to put on some clothes. She went so quickly that she wrenched off the two back legs and they turned into bits of wood. Since then human beings have only had two legs.

3

BHATTRA

Chetliguda, Koraput District

A Pengu Poroja with his wife and son lived in Rahalguda. Soon after the son's marriage, the old woman died and the Pengu performed the funerary ceremonies. Then he too fell ill and sent for a shaman. The shaman demanded a pig and sacrificed it and they all feasted on the flesh.

While the daughter-in-law was cooking she knocked the knobs off the earthen hearth as she took a pot from the fire. She was frightened, thinking that the old Pengu would abuse her, and tried to hide the broken knobs somewhere. But there was no safe place for them in the house. So she stuck one on either side of her chest and tied them in place with cloth. Presently she went into the garden to throw them away. But when she undid the cloth she found that the earthen knobs had stuck to her body and that skin had grown over them so that it was impossible to get them off.

This is why, just as the tips of the knobs on a hearth are black because pots rest on them, the nipples of the breasts are black.[1]

4

BONDO

Andrahal, Koraput District

Once the breasts of women were each a cubit long. There was a young girl who had two boys in love with her. They were for ever visiting her in the dormitory and there they fondled her breasts all night as they sang and played. Even when they

[1] Cf. story 59 of this chapter.

were eating, they would hold a breast in one hand and eat with the other.

The girl enjoyed this attention at first, but after a time she wearied of it and longed to die. One night in despair she seized a knife and cut off her breasts and died.

From the blood that flowed from her breasts there sprang up an orange tree. Since then women have had smaller breasts, beautiful and round like oranges.

5

GADABA

Surgunnaput, Koraput District

Originally human beings had no eyelids or lashes. They slept with their eyes open. It was quite impossible to tell whether a man was awake or asleep.

One night an old man and his wife, with their son and daughter, were lying asleep in their hut. The three Ganges Sisters came to visit them. They saw the sleeping people with their eyes wide open and could not understand why they did not get up to greet them. In the morning, however, they saw that their eyes were just the same as when they were asleep at night. The Sisters thought that this was very strange. They looked at their own eyes in a mirror and saw that they had lids and lashes. They went to the forest and caught a peacock. With the delicate end-feathers of the tail, they made lashes and fixed them on the eyes of the old man and woman and their son and daughter. Then the lids moved up and down, and when they slept they lay with their eyes shut.

6

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

In the old days women used to lay eggs. Once a woman laid twelve-score eggs: she sat on them for a few days, and then she left them for a time in order to dig for roots in the forest. When she returned she found that the eggs had hatched out: there

were twelve-score boys and twelve-score girls. When they saw their mother they pressed about her demanding food. But she, poor woman, had nothing to give them, and they overpowered her and devoured her body until not even a bone remained. Then they cried 'Mother, mother' and wept.

When Ispur Mahaprabhu heard the noise of their weeping, he came to ask what was the matter. When he heard, he said to himself, 'It is not good that human beings should be hatched from eggs.' He took a little blood from his thigh and gave it to the girls. When they grew up, they had breasts and bore children as they do today.

7

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

Even today horned men live in lonely mountains. Far away to the west is a great mountain, too steep to climb. Here live the horned men. They are naked and their bodies are covered with long hair. They have broad noses, high foreheads and enormous heads. If they meet a man who has no horns, they kill and eat him immediately. Their wives are very fat. Both sexes are short and sturdy. They live in tiny houses, built below ground-level. They do not know how to cook but eat their food raw.[1]

[1] 'The Orissa legends of giants, who are horned, with enormous ears, four-legged and so on, recall the tales of Megasthenes and Ktesias. Megasthenes, for example, describes the monstrous beings of ancient India, the Enotokoitai and the wild men, who could not be brought to Sandrokottos, for they refused to take food and died. 'Their heels are in front and their instep and toes are turned backwards. Some were brought to the court who had no mouths and were tame. They live near the sources of the Ganges and are supported by the smell of roast meat and the perfumes of fruits and flowers, having instead of mouths orifices through which they breathe. They are distressed with things which have an evil smell, and hence their life is sustained with difficulty, especially in a camp. Referring to the other monstrosities, the philosophers told him of the Okypodes, so swift of foot that they leave horses behind them; of Enôtokoitai who had ears hanging down to their feet so that they could sleep upon them, and were so strong that they could pull up trees and break a bowstring of sinew; of others, the Monommatoi (i.e. one-eyed men) who have the ears of a dog, their one eye set in the middle of their forehead, the hair standing erect, and their breasts shaggy; of the Amykteres also (i.e. men without nostrils) who devour everything, eat raw meat, are short-lived, and die before they reach old age; the upper part of their mouth projects far beyond the lower lip.'—M'Crindle, pp. 60ff.

8

GADABA

Onagelu, Koraput District

There is a story of people who used to go about in a large company. They never went alone. They wore enormous turbans and carried knives and axes. The extraordinary thing about them was that their noses were very fat with big nostrils and were turned upside down. Their bellies were as large as those of pregnant women in the ninth month. Their bodies were covered with hair like a bear's. They used to eat human flesh. They were called Maratha. When the villagers heard they were coming they used to fly to the hills. They would visit their homes secretly at night. For the Marathas killed and ate anyone they saw.

9

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

When the Middle World was made, Dharmo Mahaprabhu called the gods together for a dance. As he watched them, he thought, 'What fun this is! I'll give a feast for gods, men and animals, all together.'

He invited the whole world to his house, and when his guests arrived he sat them down in separate rows, gods by themselves in one row, animals by themselves in another row, men by themselves in a third row. Gosain Mahaprabhu served the food. He gave meat to the gods and the animals, but to men he gave only bones. The gods and animals ate greedily, but men were angry that they were only given bones and sat sulking, refusing to eat at all.

Presently Dharmo Mahaprabhu came round to see whether everybody had enough and was distressed to see that men were not eating anything. He sat down among them and said, 'Brothers, why aren't you eating your dinner?' They did not say a word, but sat there sulking. One of them yawned and

Mahaprabhu saw that he had no teeth. They had only bones to eat and no teeth to gnaw them.

When the gods had filled their bellies they got up and laughed at the men who still sat hungry. This annoyed Dharmo Mahaprabhu and he pulled out the gods' teeth and gave them to men. Since then the gods have had no teeth; men have had them instead. This is why the gods do not eat the meat that is sacrificed to them; they have to be content with drinking the blood.[1]

10

JHORIA

Pittayigaon, Koraput District

In the days before men got their eyes, they used to tumble over each other like puppies, and made their beds in their own excreta. One day Mahaprabhu said to himself, 'I have created a whole world of my children; I wonder how they are getting on.' He came, carrying a cane in his hand, to the Middle World to see. When he saw men tumbling about and sleeping in their own excreta, he was distressed. 'They are like this,' he thought, 'because they have no eyes.'

Mahaprabhu went to a stream. On the bank he found a large crab with enormous eyes. 'This is just what I want,' he thought. He tried to catch the crab but it bit him and retreated into its hole and withdrew its eyes into its body.

Mahaprabhu went to the forest. On a tree he saw a large owl with enormous eyes. 'This is just what I want,' he thought. He tried to catch the owl but it tore at his face with its claws, and flew away, withdrawing its eyes into its body.

Mahaprabhu sat beneath a pipal tree. On a *huruja* tree near by a crow sat eating the fruit. Some of the seeds fell down on the ground in front of Mahaprabhu. He said to himself, 'These would make good eyes.' He picked them up and fitted them into the faces of men, and after that they could see.

[1] It is generally supposed that the only part of a sacrifice consumed by the gods is the blood.

II

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

One day, when Dharmo Deota went to work in his clearing, Mother Basmoti stayed at home. She sat down to clean rice; it was a hot day and she sweated. She rubbed the dirt from her body and made a little doll. She muttered a charm over it and it turned into a living girl. Basmoti was rather afraid at what she had done. 'Where can I hide the child?' she thought. 'If Dharmo sees her, he will think that I am a sorceress.' She put the child into an empty water-pot.

Out in the forest Dharmo was working in his clearing. The sun was hot and he sweated. He rubbed the dirt from his body and made a little doll. He said to himself, 'If I could only make this alive, I would have a son.' He lay down and went to sleep. As he slept the wind blew into the doll's ear and it turned into a living boy. When Dharmo awoke he saw the child sitting beside him. Dharmo was rather afraid at what he had done. 'Where can I hide the child?' he thought. 'If Basmoti sees him, she will think I am a sorcerer.'

But all the same Dharmo took the boy home with him. They found the house empty, for Basmoti had gone down to the stream for water. Dharmo was looking round for somewhere to hide the boy, when he said, 'Daddy, I'm thirsty.' Dharmo lifted the lid of the water-pot and the girl came out. Dharmo was very excited at this, and wondered how the girl had got there. He put her back into the pot and made the boy sit by the path.

When Basmoti came from the stream, she saw the boy and thought it was the child she had hidden in the water-pot. She picked him up and was going to put him back, but when she lifted the lid the girl appeared. Basmoti was frightened. 'If Dharmo sees this,' she thought, 'he'll certainly kill me as a sorceress. I had better kill the children before he kills me.' She looked round for a knife, when Dharmo, who was hiding behind a grain-bin, burst out laughing and said, 'What are you going to kill the children for? That boy is mine. One day my boy and your girl will marry and all mankind will be born from

them.' He dressed them in a little cloth and took them outside to play in the sun.

But the children had no eyes and they tumbled about like puppies. Dharmo said to Basmoti. 'We must do something to get them eyes.' He went out to find some. Presently he met a merchant woman who was carrying a basket of cowries on her head. 'This is just what I want,' thought Dharmo. He bought some and when he put them into the children's heads they found that they could see.

12

JHORIA

Pittayigaon, Koraput District

Dharmo Deota and Mother Basmoti decided to make a man. Dharmo made the upper half, and Basmoti the lower. Neither saw what the other was doing. When they had finished, Dharmo said, 'Show me what you've made and I'll show you what I've made.' Dharmo was delighted with what Basmoti had done, but when Basmoti saw Dharmo's work she burst out laughing

'What are you laughing at?' said Dharmo. Basmoti said, 'Your hands and nose and ears and eyes are very good, but you've forgotten to give the poor creature any teeth.' Dharmo rubbed some dirt from his body and made a crow and sent it to find teeth. The crow flew down to the Under World. There it saw an old woman removing the seeds from a gourd which she wanted to use for water. The crow took the seeds and flew back to Dharmo. It perched on his right shoulder and gave them to him. Dharmo put them into his model of a man as teeth. He then joined the two parts together and made it alive.

13

JHORIA

Pittayigaon, Koraput District

Once upon a time, men had very big ears.[1] They were so big that a man could sleep on one of them as a mattress and cover himself with the other as a blanket.

One day when Mahaprabhu was out hunting, he mistook a man for an animal and killed him with an arrow. But when he saw the body and realized he had killed a man, he was very sorry. He cut off the ears to prevent such mistakes in future and restored the man to life.

Since then man's ears have been small as they are today.

14

JHORIA

Pittayigaon, Koraput District

When Mahaprabhu made men he forgot to put hair on their heads or bodies. He called the gods to his council and said to them, 'Men have no hair: how can we make some for them?' None of the gods could suggest anything, and Mahaprabhu went away.

As he was going along, he found some *sumpiri* grass and he thought, 'This will make lovely hair for women.' He picked some and went his way. Then he found some *barunichar* grass and thought, 'This will do for women's body-hair.' He picked some and went his way. After a time he came to the village of the seven Jhoria brothers. The men were out hunting, but their wives were at home. Mahaprabhu gave them the grass and it

[1] The tradition of big-eared men is very old in India. The Karnapravaranas, those who sleep in their ears, are mentioned in the *Mahabharata*, 'The opinion was universally prevalent among the Indians,' says M'Crindle, 'that barbarous tribes had large ears: thus not only are the Karnapravaranas mentioned, but also Karnikas, Lambakarnas, Mahakarnas (long, large-eared), Ushtrakarnas (camel-eared), Oshthakarnas (having ears close to the lips), and Panikarnas (having hands for ears).' He quotes Babu Jokani Das as having been told by an old woman that her husband, a sepoy in the British Army, had seen a people who slept on one ear and covered themselves with the other—exactly as in the Jhoria story above.—M'Crindle, p. 62.

turned at once into very nice hair. While they were admiring themselves and looking at the hair on their heads and under their armpits, Mahaprabhu hid behind one of the houses.

When the brothers came home and saw their wives with hair on their bodies, they were frightened and ran away, thinking that the women would eat them. Running, running they came to the jungle and hid among the *suku* grass that was growing there. The thorns of the grass stuck in their heads and over their bodies.

The women came searching for their husbands and met Mahaprabhu. They saluted him and said, 'You have changed us so much that our husbands have run away. What are we to do?' Mahaprabhu said, 'Don't worry. I'll find your husbands and bring them back to you.' He went to the jungle and searched until he found the brothers hiding among the *suku* grass. He saw the spikes sticking to their heads and bodies and said a charm and turned them into hairs.

'What are you hiding here for?' asked Mahaprabhu. 'Our wives are covered with hair; they have become witches and will certainly devour us.' 'Well,' said Mahaprabhu, 'for that matter look at yourselves.' They did so and found that they too had hair on their heads and bodies. Mahaprabhu said, 'This is nothing evil. It is the work of Mahaprabhu. They have hair, and so have you. Go home and live happily together.'

15

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

Boys and girls were dancing at the Pus Parab Festival long ago. One of the boys decorated himself with a moustache and beard of soot. Ispur Mahaprabhu came in the form of an old man and sat down on a stone by the dancing-ground. The bearded boy saluted Ispur Mahaprabhu who was pleased and said, 'Go, from henceforth you will have real moustaches and beards.'

16

KOYA

Chirpalli, Koraput District

In Malakonda village lived Mangla Koya. He had five sons, and many cattle and buffaloes. After the marriage of his youngest son, the young wife brought disease to the house and the cattle also began to die. Mangla was in despair. Then his eldest son died. Mangla called the Waddai priest and he fell into a trance and said, 'Don't live here; go to another village.' Mangla moved immediately and made a new house. When it was ready he took whatever he had left and made fields. There were good harvests and he soon was rich again.

Mangla's youngest son's nose was one-and-a-half spans long. Mangla made a great bamboo bin for his rice; the boy bent a strip of green bamboo round it. When it was ready, as he was tying it in place, the bamboo sprang from his hand and knocked off the end of his nose. He screamed with the pain. Deur came and explained, 'Now you look much better. Your nose used to be much too long.'

17

KOYA

Dudimetla, Koraput District

A Koya had three sons. He arranged their marriages. The eldest son had a daughter. Soon after her birth the Koya's wife died and after a time the Koya himself fell ill for sorrow and died.

Six years later there was a great epidemic and the three brothers and their wives died. The little daughter was left alone. She got her food by begging. Slowly she grew up and one day went to a distant village. There was a hill with a great rock and she took refuge under it. Near the hill was the village and she went to beg her food there. One day on her way home she found on the road the skull of a horse. She picked it up and took it to her shelter.

That very day the girl had her first period. For seven days she went nowhere to beg. Then when she was clean of the blood, she went to bathe, taking the skull with her. She filled it with water and brought it back. She ate her fruit and roots and drank the water.

The water made her pregnant. For thirteen months she carried the child and then was delivered of it. It had a horse's head, though the rest of the body was human. Soon after birth it killed its mother. Then it ran to the village dragging the placenta and cord behind it. When the people saw it, they ran into their houses and shut the doors. The monster caught a little boy and tore him to pieces. It went through the village terrifying everyone, but a daring hunter chased it with his gun and it ran into the forest. The placenta and cord caught in a tree and the hunter was able to shoot it.

18

KOND

Jarighati, Ganjam District

Long ago men had ears as big as a threshing-floor.[1] One day water burst out of the ground below Sutawali Hill and began to flood the whole world. Men and animals went in terror to tell Bura Pinnu, and he and his wife Pusuruli hurried to the place and heaped stones and trees over the crack in the ground. But it was no use, the water still came pouring out.

Bura Pinnu then called the people to him and told them to cut off their ears. This they refused to do. So Bura Pinnu made *irpi* spirit and gave it to them to drink. Soon they were lying about the place stupefied with liquor and Bura Pinnu hastily told Mukutera Lohar to make a new knife and cut off the ears of seven men and then to make fourteen iron nails. Bura Pinnu took the ears to the hole in the ground and spread them over it and nailed them firmly in place. He piled earth on top of them and the flood stopped.

From that day men's ears have been as small as they are today.

[1] Thurston gives a Kond tradition that long ago four Konds came from Jorasingi in Boad to the Ganjam area. They had 'eyes the size of brass pots, teeth like axe-heads, and ears like elephants' ears'.—Thurston, Vol. III, p. 368.

19

KOND

Koklanga, Ganjam District

Originally, human beings had horns growing from their heads; those of women were one cubit and two fingers long, those of men were one-and-a-half cubits long. Children used to get the horns twenty-one days after they were born.

When human sacrifice was stopped and we began to offer buffaloes to Dharni Pinnu she accepted them as her new food for three years. But in the fourth year she was dissatisfied and demanded palm-wine as well.

In those days there was no horn growing from the trunk of the sago palm and people did not know what to do, for there was no means of getting wine for the goddess. Darni Pinnu said, 'Take off your horns and bury them at the foot of the palm trees. The horns will climb up the trunk and will sprout from it.' The people at once took off their horns and gave them to Landru Kutaka who buried them beneath the palm trees. In time, from every palm there grew a horn [spadix] and when the people cut the horns, sap flowed from them and they were able to offer palm-wine to the goddess.

20

KOND

Dengsargi, Koraput District

Long ago when men and women came out of the earth at Saphaganna, the first to appear were the Konds. After them came the sahibs. When the sahibs came, Nirantali threw ash on their heads, and their bodies and hair turned white. The sahibs said, 'Now we've turned white, the Konds won't have us living with them; where are we to go?' Nirantali said, 'Go and live where the salt water is and look after the people there.' 'What shall we eat?' 'Fish and salt,' she said.

But when the sahibs' children were born, their hair was not white, but black, and so Jam Deo could not carry them away. Jam Deo sent a bee and told it, 'See the condition of men and

return to tell me about it.' The bee came back with nothing except one black hair. Jam Deo said, 'Their hair is black; how can I take them away?' The bee buried the hair in ash and next day when it looked at it it was white. So the bee took it back and dropped it on someone's head and his hair turned white. This time the bee brought back a white hair and Jam Deo said, 'Now I can fetch them,' and he sent his chaprasis to take away the children of the sahibs in death.

21

KOND

Dengsargi, Koraput District

In the old days woman had four breasts and two vaginae, one in front and one behind. But she only had one face, looking forwards. Most people were so frightened of women that they never got married.

Jam Raja had a daughter. She grew up, but no one was ready to marry her, and Jam Raja was very sad about it. When the girl realized why, she tied up her back breasts carefully. A man married her and took her home. When he lay with her, the breasts and vagina at the back talked to each other saying, 'The ones in front are enjoying themselves; we are only pressed down at the back.' The man heard them and said, 'Who is that talking? I've looked everywhere, but there's no one.' The girl said, 'There are men on my back talking to each other.' He said, 'Let me see.' She said, 'You can't see them: even I can't see them.'

Some days passed and then when the man and woman were lying together, those at the back spoke again. 'Every day these others enjoy themselves, but we have no profit. Let's kill this man.' The man heard them and ran away in a fright.

The disappointed girl went to Nirantali and said, 'I'm Jam Raja's daughter and no one will marry me. Even the one who did has run away frightened.' Nirantali said, 'Very well. Show me what's the matter.' The girl showed the breasts and vagina on her back and Nirantali took a knife and cut them off. Since then women have been as they are today.

22

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

At the very beginning of things, Nirantali made a man with a little tail like a goat's. She gave him three heads, three eyes three noses, a mouth like a horse's and three horns, one on each head.

When they knew of it, Paramugatti, Mangragatti, Ururengan and Penarengan went to Nirantali and said, 'What have you made this wretched creature for?' She said, 'When you die it will eat your flesh.' They said, 'But we don't want it to eat our flesh.' Nirantali said, 'All the same, I am going to keep it.'

But the others plotted to kill it. They dug a pit and put sharp stakes in the bottom and covered the mouth with branches and earth. They said to the horned man, 'Come let's go hunting. You can have anything we kill.' They took him and gave him hares and other animals, made him dance and jump, till at last he jumped into the pit and was impaled on the spikes.

The four went back and told Nirantali what had happened but claimed it was not their fault. She said, 'I made him to save myself the trouble of disposing of your bodies. But now we'll have to burn or bury you.'

After this, corpses were buried or burnt.

23

KUTTIA KOND

Desigathi, Ganjam District

At first men did not know how to laugh and could not distinguish between the beautiful and the ugly, or the good and the bad. Nirantali thought, 'It is a poor world where no one laughs.' She called a man and in his belly and both armpits made little organs and tied them on with cord. But the three organs went into his eyes. Then whenever he saw anything funny, the organs danced and he began to laugh.

24

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

At the beginning, before the sensation of tickling had been made, boys and girls were very solemn and proper. They used to sit together discussing their debts and the state of the crops, but they never giggled or flirted with each other. When Nirantali saw this, she thought it very tedious. 'There must be some means of bringing fun into the world,' she said. She went accordingly to Tikawali Hill and got some wax and made a tickling bug. She came home and sent the bug into the bellies of the boys and girls. 'Once you're inside,' she said, 'live under the chin, in the armpits, in the ribs, and whenever anyone touches the outside skin run about inside and they will have a pleasant feeling and want to laugh.'

The bugs went into the bodies of the boys and girls. Eight days afterwards Nirantali went to see how they were getting on. No more talk now of debts and agriculture! There was nothing but laughter and love and wriggling about. Nirantali put her hand on a girl's waist and she at once began to giggle. This was the beginning of a new kind of happiness for men.

25

KUTTIA KOND

Desigathi, Ganjam District

At first, when people died or were hurt, they did not weep After they had learnt to laugh they laughed at everything. Nirantali thought, 'This isn't proper, they ought to laugh when they are happy and cry when they are sad.' She called the people and told them so. They said, 'How are we to cry? We don't know how.' Nirantali gave them a kind of fruit. They ate it and it went into their bellies. After that, when a man fell into any kind of trouble, the fruit wobbled about in his belly and drove water up into his eyes.

26

KUTTIA KOND

Charcharganna, Ganjam District

Jaonra Pinnu was born in Saphaganna. There were no human beings in those days and the god had to live alone. When he wearied of this, he caused people to be born and gradually the world was populated.

Now in those days there was no relief from the heat. When the farm labourers went to their fields they sometimes got so hot that they fainted or were driven crazy. When Jaonra Pinnu saw this, he called them together and pricked holes in their skins with an iron pin. Blood flowed all over their bodies, but they went to a stream and bathed. Jaonra Pinnu said, 'There will be no more blood from these holes now, but in future whenever you get hot, water will pour out of you and you will feel better.'

27

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

Formerly there was a bamboo tube in the human body. It was full of salt water. This meant that people never had to get water from streams. They used to take out their tubes and wash with their own water.

Jalkamni thought, 'Men don't come near me, so how can I catch and trouble them? If I don't trouble them, they won't worship me.' So thinking she went to Nirantali and said, 'People don't use me, so I can't catch them and I get nothing to eat. What did you make me for?'

Nirantali called men and asked them to hand over their bamboo tubes. She said, 'Now you must use stream water.' They said, 'If we bathe naked, flies will bite our organs and Jalkamni will trouble us.' Nirantali said, 'Don't go into the water, but throw it over you. Don't bathe naked or you'll get itch.'

Nirantali left a little of the salt water in men's bodies and this came out as sweat.

28

KUTTIA KOND

Kudimila, Ganjam District

After the birth of mankind in Saphaganna, the new race lived there for five years. Then from a bamboo shoot was born a giant called Tengnisaren. In due time he got a wife and she bore him children.

One day the Kond elders went to discuss the time of the next Meriah sacrifice in the Sarasela jungle. The giant Tengnisaren was with them. They sat on stones, but he sat down on the ground. Yet even so he looked taller than any of them and the Konds thought, 'He looks very tall and his children too will be taller than us and will kill us.' They decided therefore to kill him first. They caught him unawares and killed him and went back to Saphaganna and told the wife that her husband had died in the jungle. She took her babies to the Sarasela jungle and saw the body cut to pieces. She wept loudly and dug a pit, and buried the bits and went home.

The people thought, 'When these children grow up, they'll revenge their father's death,' so they killed them too. In this way Tengnisaren and his family were wiped out.

Since then there have been no giants in the Kond country.

29

KUTTIA KOND

Charcharganna, Ganjam District

In the very early days, human beings had no organs for urine and excreta. All the same, they went to their clearings and ate grain. But their bellies swelled and swelled, for there was no way to void themselves. When Jaonra Pinnu saw what sufferings they had to endure, he took an iron pin and used it to make holes for the water to escape from their bellies. Into their backsides he put the stalks of gourds, pushing them right in until they reached their stomachs and the excreta could flow down the tubes.[1]

[1] Cf. the Gadaba story, MMI, p. 297.

30

KUTTIA KOND

Kudimila, Ganjam District

At the beginning, when some were poor and some were rich Rani-aru decided to put marks on people's hands to indicate their varied fate. She called the Lohars Ringona and his wife Bindona, and got them to make her an iron needle. Then she called men and marked their hands, giving some marks of wealth, some of greatness, some of barrenness, some of poverty.

31

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Koraput District

Wind goes into men's bellies. There is a bobbin inside to which a thread is attached and when the wind goes in, the bobbin dances. That is why people breathe. If water goes into the nose, the bobbin cannot dance for the cold, and the person becomes unconscious or dies. When the dancer wearies and takes rest, the man sleeps. As it dances, sometimes the bobbin stops for a moment wondering what new steps to use, and it is then that a man desires a woman.

32

KUTTIA KOND

Kumrabali, Ganjam District

In the days when people were unable to sneeze, they could not divine their good or unlucky fate, nor could they read or write. They went to Nirantali and told her how difficult it was. 'We never know whether it is safe to go for a wedding or to a bazaar. So we've come to you: teach us to distinguish lucky and unlucky things. Nirantali powdered some chillies and put the powder up their noses and they began to sneeze.

Nirantali said, 'This is how you can tell. There are two kinds of sneeze, one is good, one bad. The sneeze from the right nostril is good, the sneeze from the left nostril is bad. If anyone

goes anywhere and has an unlucky sneeze, it means everything will go wrong: if he has a lucky sneeze, he'll get what food he wants and his affairs will succeed.'

33

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

At first no one passed excreta. But one day when Karasan and Burasan were cutting the trees in their clearing, they found some wild pulse and ate it. But since they had no means of voiding themselves, their bellies swelled up bigger and bigger until at last they could not move. They lay down as they were in the clearing and there presently Nirantali found them.

'What is the matter?' she asked one of them. 'We have stuffed our bellies with wild pulse,' he said, 'and now we are so full that we cannot move.' Nirantali cut a thorn from the date palm and made a rectum. She put it into the man and pressed his belly hard and the pulse shot out with a loud noise, *barr-barr*.

'If this happens again,' said Nirantali, 'and after you have had your dinner you get a swollen belly, then with the little finger of your right hand take some soot from the hearth and draw seven lines across the skin and you will soon feel all right.'[1]

34

KUTTIA KOND

Padem, Ganjam District

At first it was women who had moustaches and beards; men grew hair on their heads and hands and feet. One day Nirantali called the people of her village to dance. When she saw the girls she thought how ugly they looked with their moustaches and beards. So she went to them and passed her hand over their faces, thus removing the hair. She put it all on Mangragatti's face instead. Ever since men have had moustaches and beards, but, whereas these things made women look ugly, they make men look handsome.

[1] Cf. the Gadaba, Gond and Saora stories in MMI, pp. 297 ff.

35

KUTTIA KOND

Charcharganna, Ganjam District

Antkiya, the Kond, was born in Saphaganna from the belly of a goat. At that time Jaonra Pinnu lived in a well. When the Kond grew up he had no hair on his body. One day he went to fetch water and met Jaonra Pinnu and they talked together for a long time. Jaonra Pinnu took the Kond to live with him and they became great friends.

After a time Jaonra Pinnu began to think how ugly his friend looked without hair. So, to make him look better, he dug up some thatching grass and put it on his head. The grass took root and turned into hair. For his moustache and beard he cut some *dupi* grass and put it also under his armpits and between his legs.

36

KUTTIA KOND

Desigathi, Ganjam District

Nirantali gave birth to two sons, Karasan and Burasan. But since she had no breasts—for no women had breasts in those days—the children got very thin; all they had was cow's milk and the milky wine of the sago palm.

Nirantali thought, 'If women do not have breasts to feed their children, the world will die.' So she filled two gourds with palm-wine and stuck them on her chest with wax. When the children wanted milk they sucked the wine from the gourds. The gourds gradually grew onto the body and the wine turned into milk.

37

PARENGA

Tetlipada, Koraput District

Once, long ago, women had three hairs on their tongues.[1] They

[1] There is a Juang tradition that women with hair growing from the tongue possessed the power of sorcery, ch. XXVIII, 5.

had tusks like a boar's, and when they talked no one could understand them. If a wife got angry with her husband, she would kill him with her tusks. And so in those days husbands were afraid of their wives, just as nowadays wives are afraid of their husbands.

Ispur Mahaprabhu thought, 'It is not good for women to dominate the world like this.' He came to the Middle World, and found men and women sleeping together. He pulled out the hairs from their tongues and the tusks from their mouths. He threw the tusks away and the boar picked them up and has had them ever since. The three hairs turned into snakes and lizards and eels. Mahaprabhu gave the women teeth made from the seeds of a gourd.

In the morning when they woke up, men were afraid of their wives, for they looked different, and they ran out of the village for fear that they would destroy them. But Mahaprabhu came in the form of an old Brahmin and said, 'Don't be afraid. It was I who did this. From now onwards it will be the husband who will rule the home.'

38

PARENGA

Tetlipada, Koraput District

In the old days, women kept their hair short and men let it grow long. Women did not even comb their hair; they simply shaved it from time to time. Ispur Mahaprabhu thought, 'This does not look very nice.' He went one night to where people were sleeping and threw a handful of oil-seed over them. The seed turned into lice. The lice did not fall on the women but they made the men itch desperately. They scratched and scratched until a lot of their hair came out.

Now both men and women had short hair, and Mahaprabhu did not like this either. He came to them and said, 'Let the women's hair grow; only men should shave and cut their hair.'

39

PENGU

Malikot, Koraput District

At first men had no ears, so they could not hear: they did everything with their eyes and when they wanted to talk, they made signs with their hands.

When men increased in number, Mahaprabhu taught them to cultivate. Some Pengus made an embankment in a small stream at Guigada and Mahaprabhu showed them how to sow rice and millet there. When the crop was ready, they reaped and threshed it. Mahaprabhu came and the farmers said to him, 'We have no ears and cannot listen to each other speaking nor can we hear the approach of animals who are able to seize us easily.'

Mahaprabhu called a python, which in those days had great ears. When the winnowing was finished, Mahaprabhu said to the python, 'Lend me your ears and we will take the grain home in them.' The python removed its ears and gave them to the Pengus who filled them with grain and took them home. Maha prabhu whispered, 'Kill this snake and steal the ears.' But the snake took fright and ran away, leaving its ears behind. That night, while the people were asleep, Mahaprabhu cut the ears into little bits and fixed them onto their heads. Then he went round shouting loudly and the people got up and came out. Since then human beings have been able to hear and snakes have had no ears.

40

PENGU

Malikot, Koraput District

When Mahaprabhu made the first boy and girl, he put them in Barathgarh and fed them on milk from a banyan tree. When they were eight or ten years old, they found they were unable to talk, for they had no livers in their bodies.

At this time, Mahaprabhu went to see how they were. They were sleeping and Mahaprabhu shouted to wake them: they answered in whispers, for they had no livers. Mahaprabhu said,

'What a lot of trouble I took to make this couple and they can neither speak nor walk.' He went home and told his wife. Next day he showed her the boy and girl. She said, 'Cut me open: cut them too and examine all three of us inside: see if there are the same things in my belly and in theirs?' Mahaprabhu first peeped into his wife's belly, then into theirs and found she had a liver but they had not. He made them alive again and told his wife what he had seen. She said, 'You must make livers for them too.'

There was a fig tree and Mahaprabhu picked two flowers and put them in the bellies of the children. The flowers turned into livers and the children walked and talked. That is why men have livers but fig trees have no flowers.

41

PENGU

Kelar, Koraput District

In the days when human beings were without ears, it was no use speaking and they did everything by signs.

Two Mahaprabhus were born in Kakrigumma. They were Karbhanga and Suklubhanga. They came to men and said, 'Give us something to eat.' But the men could not hear them and of course they made no reply. The Mahaprabhus thought, 'These are useless creatures; they cannot hear, they cannot talk; let us destroy them.'

But Karbhanga noticed that men had no ears and he said to Suklubhanga, 'Look, they havent got any ears; that's why they can't hear us.' They got *siāri* leaves and gave them to men as ears.

Even today we do not burn *siāri* leaves, for if we do we may get sores in our ears.

42

PENGU

Khutnipadar, Koraput District

Men did not know how to weep. There was a man and

woman. They had a little son and daughter. One day, while the man was away on a long journey, the daughter died. The wife took the body out of the village and buried it and came home and sat by the hearth quite happily. There was no sign of tears or sorrow.

Dharmo Mahaprabhu thought, 'This is a strange thing. People ought to be sad when someone dies. Perhaps if the son dies also, the mother will weep.'

The next day the son died. The mother took the body out of the village and buried it and came home and sat by the hearth quite happily. There was no sign of tears or sorrow.

The next day Dharmo Mahaprabhu sent Goru Deota and told him to beat the woman as men beat cattle. Goru Deota came to the house and beat her cruelly, but the woman did not cry and afterwards she sat by the hearth quite happily. There was no sign of tears or sorrow.

Finally, Mahaprabhu called the shaman and asked him how to make the woman cry. The shaman said, 'Grind some dry chilli and put it in her eyes. She'll soon cry then.' Mahaprabhu took the form of an old man, and while the woman was sleeping, came to the house, and put some powdered chilli in her eyes and mouth. She woke up crying bitterly. As she was weeping, her husband came home and when he saw her in tears, he also wept for his two children.

43

PENGU

Khutnipadar, Koraput District

Human beings had no tongues at first. In a village the people were preparing to offer a cow in sacrifice to Jakkar Deota. When the shaman tied the cow to the sacrificial pole, it began to cry loudly just as men cry today. Ghotkhandi Mahaprabhu heard the noise and came to see what was the matter. No one could tell him, for they could not speak. So he asked the cow, and the cow said, 'It is Jakkar Deota; he wants to eat me.' Ghotkhandi Mahaprabhu asked Jakkar Deota if it was really necessary. Jakkar Deota replied, 'Yes, for I cannot eat anything else.' Ghotkhandi

Mahaprabhu said, 'But why won't men talk to me?' 'It is because they have no tongues.' 'Then where can we get a tongue for them?' Jakkar Deota said, 'The tongue of this cow is very long. Cut off a bit of it and give it to men and then they will be able to talk, and the cow will be dumb.' Mahaprabhu therefore cut off a bit of the cow's tongue and twisted what was left, and so made it dumb. He gave the tongue to men and since then they have talked instead.

44

PENGU

Kelar, Koraput District

At first there was only one girl in the whole world who coughed and spat. She was the daughter of the eldest of twelve brothers, and was a cause of worry to them all. For no one would marry a girl with such strange habits and the villagers would not have her in the village. The poor girl had to live outside, and people used to take her food and leave it on the ground some distance away. Even this they often forgot to do.

One day it was very cold and the girl cried for the cold. Ghotkhandi Mahaprabhu heard the sound of her weeping and came to see what was the matter. The girl told her and that night she died. The twelve brothers carried her body far away and buried it.

A tobacco plant grew up out of the girl's ear. One day the brothers and their wives went hunting along the path which passed near the girl's grave. They went to look at it and found the plant growing there. They picked a few leaves, smelt them, chewed them, and soon found they could not live without them. Since that day all men have coughed and spat.

45

HILL SAORA

Munisingi, Ganjam District

Once long ago there lived on Mahendragiri Mountain a Pano and his wife. They had the bodies of human beings but their heads were those of horses. When people saw the horse-heads

they ran away and the Pano and his wife got no food to eat, and could not trade. One day, therefore, they went to Kittung and wept before him. He cut off their heads and they died. But he gave them another birth and they returned to the world as ordinary human beings and made their living by lending money to the Saoras.

46

HILL SAORA

Gunduruba, Koraput District

In the old days men did not know how to break wind. Like animals they went down on their hands and knees and so excreted. Kittung did his best to teach them to squat properly, but they would not learn and he got very annoyed with them.

One day Kittung wandered over the hills with his flute in his hand. On his way home he saw a Saora called Jango voiding himself on his hands and knees. Kittung lost his temper and crept up behind and pushed his flute into the man's backside and then gave it a great kick which sent it right up into his body.

The man ran home terrified and in pain. Next day he went to Kittung for help. Kittung turned the flute into entrails. 'And now,' he said, 'when you eat and wind goes into your belly with your food, it will presently pass out through the flute and will play a tune as it goes.'

47

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

In the old days men did not eat for they had no means of easing themselves; they only drank water. But animals ate a great quantity of food, for they were able to excrete.

Then men said to one another, 'These animals are always eating; surely their flesh must be very tasty. Let us too eat some and see what it is like.' They caught a horse and ate it. But presently since they could not void their burden, their bellies

swelled up and they were in great agony. They lay down and many of them lost consciousness. Kittung saw them and was afraid, for he thought all men would die.

Kittung called Saitungkum [1] the Rat and said to it, 'Somehow or other put this right.' The rat found a man lying unconscious. It went into his mouth and down into the belly, then burrowed its way out through the backside. As it came out, the horseflesh fell to the ground. The man recovered and sat up. He saw the flesh lying about and picked up a bit of it and smelt it. '*Chi-chi thu-thu*,' he cried and threw it away. This happened, one after another, to everbody in turn. They said, 'We ate horseflesh and it made a hole through us and came out.' Since then the Saoras have been able to ease themselves, but they have never again eaten the flesh of the horse.

48

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

In Battasingi village lived Sarapu Saora: his wife's name was Sukri: they had a daughter. This girl's front tooth was one-and-a-half hand-spans long. When she grew up, no one would marry her for fear of the tooth. She saw all the younger girls married and going with their husbands and she felt sad and lonely.

After her first menses, she went to the Tisur River to bathe. She washed her clothes, bathed her body and cleaned her teeth. A violent wind came and the drying clothes were whirled up into the air. The girl ran to catch them. In the river were many rocks; she slipped and fell, knocking out her tooth against a stone and lay unconscious. When she recovered, she wept but when she saw the broken tooth, she was pleased. She threw it into the mud in the river and it became a shrub.

[1] In Saora, the root *sai* means to pierce.

49

HILL SAORA

Arangulu Koraput District

When men were first made, Kittung used to bathe in the Changro River and made one bathing-place there for himself and a separate one for human beings. He told the people that they must never use his bathing-place.

One day Kittung went at midday to bathe and, as he was washing, his seed fell from him and he put it into a shell and threw it into the water. Life came into the shell and as a woman's belly swells so did the shell.

After nine months the shell broke open and out came a creature with the head of a girl and the body of a fish. She lived in the water and ate what she could. When she was mature, she was sitting one day on a rock, her head out and her tail in the water. Some people saw her and asked her who she was. She said, 'I am Kittung's daughter and this is my home.' When they saw her body half fish, they decided Kittung must have been to a fish. They laughed at him among themselves and Kittung was very embarrassed. At night he went to the stream and killed the girl and threw her body into the water.

50

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

Originally men had no tongues, and of course they could not talk. Kittung wondered how to remedy this. He thought and thought but could not devise anything. One day he went to bathe and sat on a rock. Below the rock was a hole in which lived a frog and its mate. The frog said to its mate, 'Tomorrow it's going to rain. There will be a tremendous flood which will carry away our children.' Kittung heard what the frogs were saying and caught them. He examined their tongues and saw that here was just what he wanted. He cut out the tongues and stuck them into the mouths of men and after that they were able to talk.

51

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

Kittung said to himself one day, 'I have made every kind of creature, yet I never see them. I'll invite them to a feast and then I can see my subjects.'

So he prepared a great feast and invited all living creatures—tigers, elephants, men, insects, birds. When they had assembled he made them sit in a long line and gave them their food. The animals and birds ate enormously, but men got very little for in those days they had no teeth. Kittung came to see why they were eating so little and discovered that they had no teeth.

Kittung's son came round with a gourd in his hand. He stumbled and dropped the gourd. It broke and its seeds were scattered on the ground. Kittung picked them up and turned them into teeth and fitted them into men's mouths and after that they were able to eat plenty.

52

HILL SAORA

Patthili, Koraput District

Originally, in the days of Ramma and Bimma every woman had a hair, one-and-a-half cubits long, growing from her tongue. This hair began to grow at the time of the first menstruation.

Now, there was living on Nilgiri Mountain a Saora called Subro. He had five sons and one daughter and they were all married. After their marriage the sons built separate homes for themselves and the girl went to her father-in-law's house. In due time the wife of the eldest son conceived and after nine months bore a son. She had five other sons and then conceived for the seventh time and this time too a son was born.

After the birth of this child the number of men greatly increased and they began to sin, stealing and flirting and lying with other women. As a result, the hair growing from the tongues of women began to grow smaller. One day Subro's daughter-in-law, the mother of the seven sons, went to the river for water and as she

was washing her pots, her tongue fell out into the water and turned into a fish. The hair growing from it turned into the reeds that still grow in every stream. After this no hair grew from the tongues of women.

53

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

Kittung made tongues for animals and birds, but forgot to make them for men, who were unable to talk except by signs. Kittung heard animals and birds talking, but men were silent and he wondered why. He called them and examined their mouths and discovered the reason. He tried putting all sorts of things in their mouths but they always fell out. At last he went to where a lot of figs were growing on a wild fig tree. He thought he could make tongues of these: he picked five figs and called two women and three men and put the figs in their mouths. Then men at once began to laugh and talk. Kittung said, 'Let us pick a lot and give tongues to all men.' But when he went again to the tree, he found the fruit had rotted. So only those five people and their children had tongues. And since then the wild fig has had no fruit.

54

HILL SAORA

Liabo, Ganjam District

When men were first made, their bodies were complete but for the fact that they had no nails on their fingers and toes. In those days the pestle and mortar had not been invented, and men and women had to husk grain with their hands. This was a great nuisance to them, for without nails their fingers had little strength.

When Kittung saw this, he went to a potter and bought a bit of broken earthenware. He broke it into little bits, spat on them and stuck them on the fingers and toes of men. This was how nails began.

55

HILL SAORA

Potta, Koraput District

At first it was women, but not men, who had pubic hairs. These women were very forward: they joked coarsely with the men and threw their hairs at them. The men did not like it at all.

Kittung saw what was going on and did not like it either. 'I must make hairs for men also,' he decided. He went to the Rodi River and brought back a bundle of flowery rushes. He put them in the sun to dry for three days, then beat them with a mallet till they were very thin. That day he called the boys and girls of his village and told them to play their usual games and he himself joined in. He had the rushes in his hand and as the girls threw their hairs at the boys, he stuck a bit of rush on every boy, on the skin just above his penis. At once hair grew over the place—the boys' grew more thickly than the girls' —and now the boys threw the girls on the ground and pulling out their hairs put them on their heads and in their mouths, until they begged forgiveness.

56

HILL SAORA

Maneba, Ganjam District

Men and women used to have hair all over their bodies except on their heads and this made them look ugly. Kittung decided to make hair grow on people's heads as well as on their bodies and he went to Uyungsum the Sun and asked him what to do. Uyungsum said, 'Go and find a field of millet and bring five handfuls of ears. Put them on the heads of five unmarried girls and tie them in place with a bit of cloth. Don't let them remove the cloth for five days.' Kittung returned and got the ears of millet and tied them on the heads of five unmarried girls. When he undid the cloth, they had long black hair. When they went to bathe, those who washed in the same water got hair on their heads also.

57

HILL SAORA

Gailung, Koraput District

Long ago Sima Rani held a meeting in the sky and a man and a woman went to it. The woman saluted first, then the man. Sima Rani asked, 'How am I to address you?' For they both looked exactly alike. The man said, 'This is my woman.' Sima Rani thought, 'How was it I could not distinguish them?' She took some soot from a cooking-pot and rubbed it over the man's face and said, 'Next time I'll recognize you.' After a while hair grew wherever the soot had touched the skin. After that it was easy to distinguish men from women.

58

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

When men were first born, there was only flesh and bone in their bodies and no blood. When the sun shone on them the bodies dried up and men grew weak and exhausted. They went to tell Kittung about it.

Kittung took them to Jammasum. Jammasum went to the river and brought red earth, mixed it with water and gave it to the withered men to drink. He said, 'This will turn into blood and it will be in your bodies and prevent them drying up.' After this men grew fat, for they were full of blood and moisture, and the blood gave them children.

59

HILL SAORA

Kittim, Koraput District

In the old days women had no breasts. Kittung did not like this; he thought it looked ugly and, as he said to his wife, 'When they have children, how will they nurse them?'

So he picked some brinjals and made them into breasts. At first the breasts had thorns round the nipples, just like brinjals.

The name of Kittung's wife was Rupamsuri. She gave birth to a son, but when she put him to the breast, the thorns hurt his mouth and he cried and would not drink. Kittung said, 'Why are you making the child cry? You must be hurting it.' She said, 'No, it's not me who is hurting it.' Kittung said, 'Give the child your breast.' She did so, but directly he took the teat in his mouth he began to cry. Kittung said, 'What's the matter? Let me try.' He put the teat in his mouth and the thorns scratched his lips. He took a stick from the fire and burnt off the thorns. But his wife caught hold of the stick and burnt Kittung's nipples too. That is why there is a black circle round the nipples.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

THE REPRODUCTIVE FUNCTIONS OF MAN

The Reproductive Organs[1]

1

BONDO

Mundlipada, Koraput District

Soma Bodnaik was born long ago on Bali Hill. In those days men had organs that were five cubits long and they used to keep them tied round their waists.

Mahaprabhu gave Soma a wife, but he used to make her sleep on a separate cot and take her from a distance. In due time a son was born and grew up and he too got a wife.

One day, soon after the wedding, Soma Bodnaik's wife was cooking dinner and her son and daughter-in-law were sitting by, while Soma rested, smoking his pipe on the veranda. Presently Soma uncoiled his organ and waved it to and fro in front of his wife. She was very annoyed and cried, 'Aren't you ashamed to do such a thing in front of your son and daughter-in-law?' She struck at the organ with her iron spoon and cut off all but two handfuls where he was able to grasp it.[1]

2

KOND

Pukur, Ganjam District

Dakpaji's organ was seven-and-a-half cubits long and one-and-a-half cubits thick. He used to coil it on a separate cot when he went to sleep. When his wife wanted him to approach her, she used to pick it up and carry it to her own cot. When they went anywhere, the wife used to carry it coiled up on her head while her husband followed close behind.

[1] For many parallels to the stories in this chapter, and for a discussion of them, see MMI, chs. XII and XVIII.

One day husband and wife went to visit Bura Pinnu. On the way they passed under a great tree on which a kite was sitting. When the kite saw the great organ coiled up on the wife's head it swooped down and carried it off. Husband and wife sat by the path and wept loudly; then they went to tell Bura Pinnu what had happened. He said, 'Don't worry. A new organ will grow from the place; it will only be seven fingers long, but it will be enough.'

3

KUTTIA KOND

Kalanguda, Ganjam District

In the old days when the penis was twelve cubits long, men used to wear it round the waist as a girdle. The woman's thing was one cubit long and hung down like a bag between the thighs. When they walked about the bags used to swing to and fro and trip them up.

One day when a Kond woman was cooking gruel for dinner, a man lying in his house across the street desired her, and uncoiling his organ sent it to her kitchen. But when the woman saw it coming in through the door like a snake, she lost her temper and hit it with her spoon and it shrunk to its present size.

Then the woman went to Nirantali and said, 'I've cut off man's organ and made it small, but what am I to do with this enormous bag of mine?' Nirantali cut it off and threw it into the Gunjiaru River and it turned into a tortoise.

4

KUTTIA KOND

Kumrabali, Ganjam District

Originally the vagina was in the middle of the forehead. The only cloth worn by women then was a turban. Sona-aru and Rupa-aru were like this. One day they said to Nirantali. 'So long as it's in the forehead, there is danger that some man may pull it out.'

Nirantali put it in the armpit instead. But it was too obvious there and people used to giggle when they saw it.

Sona-aru and Rupa-aru went again to their mother and said, 'This is no use; people giggle when they see it.' This time Nirantali fixed it between their thighs with wax, and in time it stuck there.

Menstruation

5

BONDO

Bodapada, Koraput District

A brother and sister went to their swidden to dig their seeds into the ground with hoes. The sister was working in front and the brother was behind. As she bent down, the boy saw the girl's beauty and desired her. He caught the girl and took her by force. Much blood flowed and she died, for she was very young.

From the blood shed in the clearing grew the chilli plant. The boy was very sad when he saw the dead body of his sister, and he climbed down into a pit out of which roots had been dug and died there. His body turned into the first edible root.

Because of this, when people go to dig for roots, they first of all salute the place three times and then begin to dig. When they get a root they cut off the head and throw it back into the pit and take the rest home.

It was after this that women began to have a period every month. But no woman begins to menstruate until the door has been opened by a man.

6

KOYA

Chirpalli, Koraput District

Originally women did not menstruate and when babies were born they had no eyes or mouths and died within the day. Because of this the number of people in the world did not increase.

One day a man called Sukra Koya went to Deur and told him what was happening. Deur asked him whether women had a flow of blood every month. 'No,' said Sukra, 'I have never heard of such a thing.' Deur plucked a certain leaf and gave it to him and said, 'Pound this up and put it in the place where people go for water, and you'll find that all the unmarried girls will get a flow of blood. They will be very frightened at first, but you must explain things to them and teach them how to bathe at the end of their time and boil their clothes in a new pot.'

Then Deur said, 'On the third day after the first bath, tell the girls to make a doll of grass and blacken it with charcoal. They should then take it with a hen's egg to a crossroads and there sacrifice a fowl in my name and bury the doll and the egg.'

The Koya returned home and did what Deur had advised. Guruwari was the first girl to menstruate and when she was clean of it, she worshipped the god. That night Deur came to her and with the feet of the sacrificial hen scratched marks on her belly. He still does this even now to every girl when she first begins to menstruate.

7

KOND

Kudelpada, Kalahandi District

All the world was in pairs, birds and animals, insects and reptiles, men and women. But there was one man, Dinaravenj, who had no woman. He searched for one till he was weary and at last went to Nirantali and said to her, 'Even the birds and animals have their mates—why is there nobody for me?'

Nirantali said, 'You have a wife, a great and beautiful wife, but you don't know her. She is the whole world.' 'But what can I do with the whole world?' asked Dinaravenj. Nirantali said, 'You will be the first to embrace each girl in the world when she becomes mature. You will be the first, others will follow.' 'But how will the girls know that I have been to them?' 'Because of the blood that will flow afterwards.'

Nirantali had two daughters, Rani-aru and Sona-aru. They grew up but they had no menses. Dinaravenj went to them in

a dream and they began to menstruate. From their blood came gold and silver. Nirantali saw the beautiful metals shining *chikmik-chikmik* and called Sonrenj the goldsmith and asked him, 'What are these shining things?' Sonrenj said, 'One is gold and one is silver.' Nirantali said, 'Go and bring me some.' Sonrenj said, 'But how can I?' Nirantali gave him an axe and said. 'Go and cut it up and bring me some. If you are lucky, you will get big pieces; if your fate is bad, you'll only get little scraps.'

Sonrenj was unlucky and was only able to get some scraps of the gold and silver. Nirantali said to him, 'From today your work will be in gold and silver, but you will not have much of it.' Dinaravenj still visits every girl as she matures and it is through him that her blood begins to flow.

8

KUTTIA KOND

Padem, Ganjam District

Before women began to menstruate they had no children. Nirantali said to herself, 'If things go on like this, the population will never increase and people will just remain as they are.' She made a worm and when it was ready she called Paramugatti's wife and made her sit down beside her. They began to chat and suddenly, when the other woman was not looking, Nirantali slipped the worm into her belly. Then she called Paramugatti himself and in the same way put a similar worm into his belly.

She said to the worm in the woman's belly, 'Suck up all the blood and keep it inside the womb. Then cut the bag and let it flow out. When all the blood has flowed out stay by the door for three days. Then when the man goes to the woman, his seed will cover you and you will die. In this way children will be born.'

9

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

In the old days girls did not menstruate. Rani-aru was bothered about this, for she thought, 'If they do not menstruate, how

will children be born?' She sent for Jaora Pinnu and said to him, 'Go to these girls in dreams and enjoy them. Directly you embrace a girl she will menstruate. And then for your reward she will give you a pig or fowl on the day she bathes.'

'Certainly I'll do it,' said Jaora Pinnu, 'but how will they call me and how will they recognize me?' Rani-aru said, 'On the day you visit a girl, make marks on her belly with your nails.'

The first girl that Jaora Pinnu visited was Pairi, the daughter of Paramugatti. She began to menstruate and after five days she washed her head and her cloth and sacrificed a pig and a fowl. That night Jaora Pinnu visited her again and scratched her breasts and belly. The boys and girls saw the marks when she got up next morning and laughed at her. But every girl who laughed at once began to menstruate and the marks appeared on their own breasts and bellies.

10

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

A man called Karikati once lived in this village, Duppi. His wife's name was Kusuraddi, and they had one daughter. This girl used to go daily to guard the swidden where they raised their crop. One day a red-headed lizard asked her, 'Are you mature or no?' She said, 'Not yet, not yet.' Then he asked her this every day. One day she said, 'Why do you keep on asking whether I am mature or not?' The lizard said, 'You will never be mature till I lie with you.' She was annoyed at this and cursed the lizard. 'You are only a dirty lizard; how can you lie with me?' But that very night after she had gone to bed the lizard came secretly and lay with her. At once the power of its scarlet head caused her to menstruate. In the morning the lizard got up and went out in the garden where it sat in the sun wagging its head up and down. The girl told her parents what had happened and they told her that she must not cook or draw water until she was clean again.

Even now, before a girl menstruates for the first time, a lizard visits her in a dream and lies with her.

11

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

At the beginning women never knew when their periods were due. Sometimes they had them every week, sometimes after ten days, sometimes after a month. As a result of this confusion no children were born.

When Kittung's wife observed this, she said to her husband, 'Mankind has been in the world for a long time now, yet there is no increase. Make some arrangement whereby women may have children.' Kittung asked her to find out what was the matter. She asked a number of women and they all said, 'Because there is no flower [placenta] in the belly.' She went home and told her husband to find a flower, and he went to the forest for one. He walked and walked, searching everywhere, but he could find nothing that would do.

But at last he came to a tank where lotus flowers were growing and he picked one and took it home to his wife. She called Ramma's daughter and put the flower on her head saying, 'Henceforth women will have a period only once a month and children will be born.'

Ramma's daughter went home and after a month she began to menstruate. Every girl on whom her shadow fell menstruated also. And now this happened regularly and soon children were born and the population increased.

Conception and Childbirth

12

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

There lived in a certain village an old man and his wife. They were very rich. They had just one daughter and were determined not to marry her to anyone outside their own village. But the old man could not find anyone willing to do this and he had to bring a youth to serve in his house instead. The girl and

the boy soon fell in love with each other and in due course were married. But only two months after the marriage the boy died. He was buried and on the third day the rites were performed. On the fourth day the boy's soul went to Rumrok and said, 'I have not had much happiness from my wife; there has not been time. Allow me to go and live with her again.'

Rumrok said, 'Go to the place where your body was burnt and you will turn into a lizard with a red head. Go and live in a tree outside your wife's village by the path down to the well. Whenever you see any girl going to wash her head after her period, jump onto the ground and enjoy her shadow by scratching the ground on which it falls.'

On the very first day the boy's own wife went down to wash her head, and the lizard jumped onto the ground and scratched the place where her shadow had fallen as she passed by. When the girl reached home she found marks of scratching on her belly. Afterwards the lizard also used to visit her in dreams.

13

KOND

Kesaraguda, Ganjam District

Bura Pinnu and Pusuruli made male and female dolls with dirt rubbed from their bodies and put them into the hollow of a bamboo. After nine months the bamboo broke open and a boy and girl came out. Bura Pinnu and Pusuruli looked after them and when they were grown up married them to each other. After a long while the girl gave birth to a boy. When Bura Pinnu and Pusuruli saw what a long time it took, they said to each other, 'If people are going to be born at this rate, it will take hundreds of years to populate the world.' So they said to the boy and girl, 'From now on have two children at a time.' And for some years the girl gave birth to twins.

But then Bura Pinnu and Pusuruli thought, 'If people are going to be born at this rate, there will soon be too many of them in the world.' So Bura Pinnu took a little dust from his feet and gave it to the woman to eat saying, 'From now onwards

bear one child at a time. But five out of every five hundred women will give birth to twins once in five years.'

14

KUTTIA KOND

Surangbaro, Ganjam District

At the beginning Nirantali told the she-goat to bear two kids at once, but the human mother to have only one child at a time. In those days it was not every woman who had a child. In a village of say twenty houses, only about five would have children. Nirantali thought that all women should have children, and that if they had only one at a time, the population would increase very slowly.

So Nirantali called Paramugatti's wife and gave her a mango and some tamarind to eat and made a cross on her tongue saying, 'You will give birth to a boy and a girl at the same time.' Then she called the Lohar's wife and gave her two mangoes and made a mark on her tongue like a chilli. In due course, both women conceived and gave birth to children—Paramugatti's wife had a boy and a girl and the Lohar's wife had two boys.

Nirantali said to them, 'Not all women will be like this, but only those who have my special mark on their tongues.'

15

KUTTIA KOND

Kumrabali, Ganjam District

Nirantali had three children, a boy, Sechamali, and two girls, Sona-aru and Rupa-aru. No one else had children in those days. So Nirantali got a certain fruit and put it aside for Sechamali to eat. But Sona-aru and Rupa-aru found it and ate it themselves. In their bellies the fruit grew into a little tree and bore the placenta-flower. From this came children into the world.

16

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

In former days, when women had no marks on their bellies, they bore no children. Kittung and Uyungsum were worried about this and gave women every kind of medicine but still they did not produce any children.

One night Uyungsum gave a dream to Kittung and said, 'Send for Darammasum and take some of the dirt from his ear: mix it with water and put it on the heads of the women and they will conceive.'

Next morning Kittung sent for Darammasum but he was unwilling to give him any of the dirt from his ear. Kittung, however, promised him that he would become famous and that whenever a child was born, the father would offer him a fowl.

Uyungsum said, 'When a child is born in any family, make marks on it with your nails and it will be yours.'

Darammasum therefore agreed and gave Kittung some dirt from his ear and when it was put on the heads of the women, they began to conceive. When the children were born Darammasum scratched their bellies with his nails. Sometimes he kissed them and they had a mark on their cheeks as well.

17

HILL SAORA

Abbasingi, Ganjam District

Ramma and Bimma had three wives. The two elder were barren but the youngest had a child in her belly. Ramma and Bimma were very pleased with her. When the time for the delivery came the two elder women said, 'When this child grows up it will take everything away and what shall we do then?' And when the mother's pains began they took her into an inner room of the house, and tied her hands and blindfolded her. They set up two pillars and tied her legs to it. In this way after great trouble she gave birth to a son. When she was lying there exhausted, the other women took the baby away and put a kitten

in its place, covering it with the blood. They hid the child under a heap of dung in the cowshed.

That evening when the cows came home, one of them ate the child and it went alive into its belly. Ramma and Bimma came home and the two elder wives said, 'Look, your wife has given birth to a kitten.' When the men saw it they were very angry and drove the poor mother away.

The cow which had eaten the child went down to the river, and when it dunged, the child came out and fell into the water. There he became Labosum.

Now the mother, as she was wandering in the jungle, grew very hungry, and she went to the river to catch fish and gather weeds for food. The child in the river recognized its mother and cried, '*Young-young.*' The mother said, 'Who is that crying *young-young*?' and searched for it. Presently she found the child and begged him to come home with her. But he said, 'I am now Labosum and I must stay here.'

But when Ramma and Bimma heard what had happened they drove the elder women away from the house and took the young wife back.

Since then we Saoras have always put a stone for a mother to sit on and we tie a rope above her head for her to hold.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE DISEASES OF MAN

1

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

There was a pestilence in the village of Kitliguda and many of the people died. Those who survived fled from the place, but there was an old woman of the Komti caste who was too old to walk and had to remain behind. She crawled from house to house, collecting all the grain that had been forgotten and on this she lived for several years. Then one night four thieves came to the village. They found the place dark and deserted save for a flickering fire in the old woman's house. She was lying asleep and by her head was a pot with a little salt. The thieves searched the house, but found nothing else so they took the pot and went on their way.

The old woman woke and when she saw her pot was gone she was sad and angry. 'Where is the thief?' she cried. From afar she heard the noise of their feet, and she cursed them saying, 'As you took my salt, so may your bodies melt as salt melts in the rain. As I have no hands or feet, being old, and cannot walk, so may you be maimed without hands or feet.' When dawn broke the thieves found themselves changed into lepers and after a time they died miserably.

2

BHATTRA

Parsel, Koraput District

There was a Bhattra and his wife. They had no children, for the woman was a witch. The Bhattra got every kind of medicine and called many medicine-men: it was no use. But at last when the woman was very old, she conceived. When her time was complete, twins were born—a boy and a girl. They

slowly grew up and when the boy was ready for marriage, his father went to Janni Bhattra of Amdouri village for a girl. He gave him liquor and discussed the matter of his daughter. Janni was ready to give her but his wife did not approve and they could not persuade her. When the Bhattra got home he told his wife; she was very angry and thought, 'I'll give this girl epilepsy and she'll not be able to marry anyone.'

The Bhattra's wife went to Buthadongar and got some thatching-grass. She extracted its oil and took it to Banjari Deo[1] and said, 'Come into this oil and I'll put it on a certain girl and you give her epilepsy.' Banjari Deo was agreeable and she put him in the oil. She went to Janni's house, called the girl and smeared the oil on her body. She at once fell down and from her mouth flowed saliva and blood.

Banjari Deo said, 'This kind of disease will be among men now: when it comes give me a goat, coconuts and a pig. But whatever you do for this particular girl, she won't recover.'

3

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

As the Didayis grew in number, gods also began to be born. For twelve years the gods wandered over the countryside, hungry and thirsty; no one took any notice of them, or gave them anything. At last in despair they went to Rumrok and said, 'It is now twelve years since we were born and we have had nothing to eat or drink all this time. Give us a place to live and make arrangements for our food.'

Rumrok said, 'There is a Didayi called Khandia living in Ranipodor. Go to his house and torment his children; give one

[1] Banjari Deo, or Devi, is known throughout middle India as the god of travellers. He is properly a tutelary deity of the Banjara gypsies who make a heap of stones as his shrine. As travellers go by, they each add a stone to the pile. See Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. II, p. 176; *Bilaspur District Gazetteer*, p. 74; *Chhindwara District Gazetteer*, p. 45; etc. There does not seem any particular reason why Banjari Deo, rather than any other god, should figure in this story. For a similar story, where the god involved is Mardi, see ch. XXXI, 6.

fever, another fits, a third dysentery, the others itch. He will soon give you all you want to eat.'

The gods hurried away to Ranipodor and found Khandia living with his large family, happy and prosperous and at peace. That evening the youngest child went down with fever and the eldest had a fit. By morning everyone in the house was scratching with intolerable itch. Another of the children was weeping with bloody motions. Khandia was terrified; such a thing had never happened before and he went at once to Rumrok. 'What am I to do?' he asked.

'All this is due to the gods,' said Rumrok. 'The only way out of the trouble is to feed them well.' And he told the Didayis how to give a goat and a red cock to Kot, a white cock to Dhar, a red cock to Patri, eggs to Birihui.[1] In this way the Didayis learnt the names of the gods, and how to appease them. Khandia went home and offered sacrifice and his children recovered.

4

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

Bhairon Mahaprabhu had a sister named Kankali Mardi. The girl was unmarried until one day Bhairon in a temper ordered her to marry. She obeyed him and in due time conceived and was delivered of twelve score boys and thirteen-score girls. There were a great many of them but they were very small.

Kankali Mardi was frightened when she saw this crowd of children and put them in a pot and closed it with a lid. But they soon began to grow and broke the pot open from inside. The children came out and began to bite their mother's body. 'Give us something to eat,' they cried, 'or we'll eat you.' Their mother said, 'Go to the Middle World, where men live, and there you will get plenty to eat.' They went to the Middle World and gave men cholera, and for fear of them people gave them food-offerings.

[1] These are local godlings about whom nothing special is known.

5

GADABA

Gunaipada, Koraput District

Long ago there was a very large village called Gunaipada, but one day an army of snakes attacked the village and made twelve score of the women widows. Then came tigers and made another twelve score widows. Then came smallpox and made yet another twelve score widows. There were so many widows that a special village, apart from the main village, was built for them. The leader of the women was a Konda Dora. She became Chief. She was enormously fat and needed six cubits of cloth to go round her waist. She was very strong. All the people obeyed whatever orders she gave.

At the time of festival each widow used to take one grain of wild rice outside the village. She would break an egg and cook the grain of rice in the shell. Then with a single blade of *chir*-grass she would take out the grain and offer it in the name of her dead husband, after which she would pick it up and eat it.

At that time there was a great jungle all round Gunaipada. One day the people of Gunaipada had a quarrel with the shaman of Gadabapada and he called the god Tupka to attack them. The god came to the widows' hamlet and killed every one of them. This god used to eat nothing but the livers of human beings and he killed the women by biting their livers and filling their stools with blood. Medicine-men came from many neighbouring villages but none could save those who were attacked. A few people who survived ran away and made their homes elsewhere.

Since that day Gunaipada has been very small and split up into several hamlets.

6

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

Leprosy is caused by the ghost (*duma*) of a god. Long ago

there were among the gods twelve brothers. They were all married except the youngest, and he, in spite of all persuasion, refused to take a wife. The eleven brothers used to go every day for a meeting (*sabha*) of the gods, but the youngest boy stayed at home; while his brothers were away, he lay with each of their wives every day. This went on for a long time, and the boy grew very thin as a result of his exertions.

One day the other brothers said, 'This boy does no work, yet he gets thinner and thinner. Whatever can he be up to?' The eldest brother said, 'When the rest of you go to the council, I will stay behind and watch him.' So next day, when the others went out, the eldest brother went quietly to a grain-bin and hid inside. The youngest brother, thinking that the others had all gone away as usual, began his daily task.

When the other brothers returned in the evening, the eldest told them what he had seen. They were very angry, but they said nothing at the time. Next morning, however, they asked the youngest brother to go with them to hunt in the forest, and when they had got him there, they tied him up, and cut off his hands and feet and left him. He lay for a little while where he was, and then he died.

The boy's ghost became a leper, without hands or feet, and whenever he visits anyone, his victim too becomes a leper.[1]

7

GADABA

Challanguda, Koraput District

Bhairon Mahaprabhu's sister was Mother Buddhi and she had three daughters. They all lived with Bhairon and he used to look after them and feed them. One day he went to visit the Middle World, and the old woman and her daughters had nothing to eat while he was away. They got very hungry and the children wept so much that at last the old woman tied two of them on her back and put the third on her head, and followed Bhairon to the Middle World. She came to a village and went to the priest's house.

[1] Compare the Pengu story 16 of this chapter.

Now Mother Buddhi was very dirty and wherever she went she was followed by a swarm of flies. When she sat down on the priest's veranda, there were flies everywhere. The priest and his wife beat her and drove her away. The other villagers too cried '*Chi-chi thu-thu*' and drove her from their doors. As she went through the village, the children ran after her throwing stones and dirt. She came to a *kekar* tree, and the tiny fruit was lying on the ground beneath. Full of anger, she gathered up the fruit in both her hands and threw it at the children who were tormenting her. They were suddenly frightened and ran away.

The old woman went a little further and then she sat down on a stone and remained quiet and silent for a long time.

But back in their homes the children fell ill with smallpox and all over their bodies pustules appeared, small and round like the *kekar* fruit.

8

JHORIA

Umel, Koraput District

Deoguni was born first, then Nirguni. The two brothers went away and then Mai Mata was born in the same place. She stood up and looked round. She saw the sun in the sky and the earth at her feet, but no sign of any living creature. But before her stretched the lines of footmarks made by her brothers. She followed them and so came to the Middle World.

When Mai Mata found Deoguni and Nirguni, they said, 'It is true that we are your brothers, but we have our wives to look after; go and get a husband to look after you.' They drove her away and did not even give her a little food or drink. Mai Mata was very sad, but there was nothing she could do. She took the form of an old woman, dirty and covered with sores. Flies hovered in a cloud about her. She came to a village where the people were celebrating the Festival of the Pulse Harvest. She thought, 'Surely I will get something to eat here.' She went to the Chief's house and sat at his door begging for food. But when the Chief's wife saw how dirty she was and

how the flies followed her, she drove her away. Mai Mata went from house to house, but no one would give her anything. At last she went out of the village and sat by the roadside.

Near where she was sitting the villagers had sacrificed their pulses to Bat Deota (the Road God) and some of it was lying on the ground. Mai Mata gathered a handful of the pulse and tied it in her cloth. That night, when everybody was asleep, she went round the village dropping the pulse, now on a father, now on a mother, now on a child. In the morning all on whom she had dropped the pulse were ill, with little swellings that looked like pulse.

The Chief called a shamanin to divine the cause of this. Pat Deota came upon the woman and said, 'Your village was visited by the sister of Deoguni and Nirguni, but you gave her nothing to eat. Build her a house by the roadside and sacrifice a cow to her, and you will recover. Otherwise she will kill you all.'

9

JHORIA

Lamda, Koraput District

A potter and his wife lived in Unchogudo. They had a daughter—she was still unmarried when all this happened—whose name was Buddhi. One day she went to bathe in a stream near a place where two Jhoria boys were catching fish. When the boys saw the girl, they caught hold of her, threw her down and enjoyed her. At that very moment the girl's period began and a stream of blood poured from her. Immediately the boy who was with her found sores on his body and his urine full of blood. The girl sat on a stone to wash herself and went home. As she went drops of blood fell on the ground all the way to the house. Everyone who walked over the blood fell ill. The boy who caused the trouble died. Every kind of disease came to mankind. It was all because of the blood of a menstruating girl.

10

KOYA

Chirpalli, Koraput District

There were no gods, no priests, no sorcerers at first. Men increased in number and prosperity. The gods were living with Deur and he found it a great burden. Deur thought, 'I'll send these gods to men and they'll have to see about feeding them.' He made a rope with his own hair and lowered the gods down to earth and said to them, 'Go to men, give one fever, one a belly-ache, one blindness; torment and trouble them and they'll give you plenty to eat.'

The gods came down and began to torment men and in their distress they hurried to Deur and said, 'What is happening? Why are we being put to such awful trouble?' Deur said, 'It's nothing; it is only the gods who've come to live with you. When you give them plenty to eat and drink, they'll leave you alone.' He took a Koya outside the village and sat down in a lonely place and taught him to divine with the winnowing-fan, the gourd and the lamp, and how to make promises and sacrifice.

The Koya in this way cured men and the gods were well fed. He was the first shaman.

11

KUTTIA KOND

Duppi, Ganjam District

When the Sun began to go round the earth, he used to see men relieving themselves every morning and got very tired of it.[1] One day he was really angry. 'I make light for men and my only reward is that they present their organs to my face. I must punish them.'

Next day the Sun picked a certain red flower and climbed into the sky with it. That morning Jagat Gond was relieving himself and when the Sun saw him, he threw the flower on him and said, 'Go and become syphilis, the scorpion-disease.'

[1] I have often found in Madhya Pradesh the idea that it is dangerous to insult the sun by facing it while urinating.

The flower fell on Jagat and fifteen days later he fell ill and the disease broke out of his belly in swellings and sores. The Sun was pleased and said to the disease, 'Become a fly and go into the bellies of many men. But if anyone gives you a goat, leave him, and go to someone else.'

12

KUTTIA KOND

Rangaparu, Ganjam District

In the days before mountains were made, those who had cattle ploughed their fields. Those who had no cattle went hungry, and soon fell ill with various diseases. Rani-aru and Rupa-aru had no cattle. They went to Nirantali and said, 'We have no cattle: how can we do our cultivation? How can we be free of disease?'

Nirantali cut off Rani-aru's head and threw it away. The drops of blood turned into little hills and where a lot of blood fell there rose Dimul Mountain, a great hill. Thence a mongoose[1] brought Rani-aru's head back, stuck it on the corpse and made the girl alive again.

Nirantali said, 'Look, all these hills were formed from blood. They should be washed with blood. Whenever you take anything from hills—wood, clay, leaves—give them blood.'

13

KUTTIA KOND

Charcharganna, Ganjam District

Pijjumunda[1] was the name of the water-place in Saphaganna. Jaonra Pinnu lived there. Ururengan Kond and Singelaji his wife went to him and said, 'Give us a blessing.' Jaonra Pinnu put his hand on their heads and as he touched them their heads began to ache. He touched their noses with his finger and they sneezed. He opened their mouths and they began to cough. As

[1] For the mongoose as a life-restorer, see my *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal*, p. 68.

[1] *Pijju* in Kui is rain: *munda* is a tank.

he stroked their bodies fever spread over them. He poked his finger into their flesh and it broke into sores. He touched their privates and they got gonorrhoea. They were ill for seven days and then Jaonra Pinnu gave them medicine and they recovered.

14

KUTTIA KOND

Kumurupa, Ganjam District

Nirantali had a pustule of smallpox on her forehead. There was no discharge from it, no pus or water. Nirantali said to Ururengan and Penarengan, 'Look at the swelling on my head, I cannot cure it. Get me some remedy.' They said, 'There is no need for medicine, but eat salt and chilli, fish and meat every day and soon there will be a discharge from your swelling and you will recover.'

So now whenever a man has a wound he eats plenty of meat and fish and the pus comes out of his wound and he recovers.

15

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

Paramugatti made his clearing on Kandabara Hill and sowed all manner of seed in it. When the crop was ready an elephant and a horse came from Golpara Hill and destroyed it. Paramugatti called Nirantali and she went to stop them, but they took no notice of her. She was angry and went again while they were eating and said, 'You are spoiling the crop. So all over your bodies there will be little sores like grains of millet.'

At once the elephant and the horse began to itch; they scratched themselves till the skin came off. They soon came weeping to Nirantali. She said, 'Leave the clearings alone and I'll send the itch away.' But the itch said, 'But where shall I go? What did you make me for?' Nirantali said, 'I'll give you a better home and you'll get better food.'

The itch left the elephant and horse and Nirantali sent it to

the Doms and the Gonds. 'They'll put oil and turmeric on you and you'll get plenty to eat.'

When the Doms and Gonds started selling things to the Konds they too got itch. The Doms and Gonds give a black chick to cure the disease, but the Konds do not bother to do anything.

16

PENGU

Kelar, Koraput District

There were seven brothers, of whom all were married except the youngest. One day the boy said to the others, 'You are all married, but I am not.' They said, 'Go and find yourself a wife.' The boy went from village to village searching, and for a long time he could not find anyone. At last in despair, he brought a pretty sweeper girl.

But when the brothers heard that he had brought a sweeper girl, they were very angry and would not let them into their house. They even stopped them going to their sago palms for wine. But the boy was strong and violent; he climbed the trees and took the wine; he went into the fields and removed the crops. The brothers had to spend much of their time guarding their possessions against him.

In the end they wearied of this. They caught the boy and took him to the forest. There they cut off his fingers and toes and broke his legs and left him to die. It is his ghost which gives people leprosy.

17

SAORA

Jhar, Sambalpur District

Indraban Raja lived in Ujjain. He had four sons. When they grew up they went hunting every day. But the Raja suspected his sons were after girls and one day he called them and lectured them. 'Always return by the same road by which you went out,' he said.

One day the four brothers went to Kantlaban Hill. There

they started a deer and chased and shot it. It was the third brother whose arrow hit and killed it. At that moment a great storm of rain burst upon them.

The brothers tied the deer to a pole and carried it home, but all the streams were flooded and they got weary of carrying such a weighty load. The youngest brother said, 'It's very heavy. Let's cut the stomach and remove the intestines to lighten it.' They cut the carcass open and removed the intestines.

Now in this deer's belly was every kind of disease: one brother got fever, another a cough, the others itch, belly-ache, fever. As they went, they reached a river, and while crossing it the deer's blood fell in the water and was carried downstream to many other people. When the brothers divided the flesh among the neighbours, they also fell ill. They called Narsingh Guru and he came and cured them.

18

SAORA

Bhaira (Khariar), Kalahandi District

Raja Dasaratha ruled in Jaitanagar. Whenever he talked with his subjects he used to wag his finger at them. This angered them and one day they assembled and cursed him, 'He wags his finger at us; let his finger rot.'

Two or four months later, the Raja's finger began to hurt; soon it swelled and sores broke out and pus came from them. The Raja got medicine and called the best doctors and magicians, but to no avail.

Then the Raja's Pandit consulted his books and said, 'O Raja, send your sons Rama and Lakshman into exile if you want the sores on your finger to heal.' The Raja thought this advice absurd and for a long time he refused to follow it. But when the pain in his finger grew insupportable, he called the two boys and said, 'Go to the forest and search for medicine for twelve years.' They went to the forest and after twelve years they brought the medicine and the Raja put it on his finger. The sores healed, but after that anyone who wagged his finger at another while he talked became a leper.

19

SAORA

Rayagada, Ganjam District

A Pano named Balbota lived with his wife for many years, but he had no child by her. At last they took counsel together and went to the shrine of Phalkosum on the Maksan Mountain. They begged the god for a gift and he gave the woman a flower of seven colours. When she ate it she conceived and in due time gave birth to a son. But from the blood of her body came all the diseases in the world. The Pano took the blood-stained cloth, with the placenta and the cord, and threw them into the Jamir River. Then whoever went to bathe there fell ill and disease spread through the world.

20

HILL SAORA

Pekat, Ganjam District

There were seven brothers, of whom six were married and had children. The youngest boy, who was unmarried, was a Kittung. Now one day the son of the eldest brother died and was carried to the pyre. When the flames leapt up they burnt all the skin, but they could not consume the flesh. The people piled all the wood they had upon the body and then went to the forest to bring more. While they were away, the Kittung cut off some of the flesh from the body and hid it in his loin-cloth. The people returned with a lot of dried wood and at last the corpse was burnt. The mourners went to bathe and then returned home. The Kittung went to his mother and said, 'I am hungry; give me some gruel to eat. I have caught a bird and I will eat the meat with my gruel.' Thus the Kittung ate the flesh of the dead boy.

Then one by one the Kittung by his magic caused all the sons of his brothers to die and each time he stole some flesh from their bodies on the pyre and ate it. Then the last brother took his son's body for burning and the Kittung stole some of the flesh as usual. But for some reason the other brothers asked him to change his clothes. The Kittung was frightened and said that

he must go to his mother first. The brothers said, 'What is this flesh that you get to eat every time we have a funeral?' And they tore off his loin-cloth and discovered the bit of human flesh. When they saw it they were very angry and raised their axes to kill him, but he turned himself into a bird and rising into the air flew away to Gangamari Hill. The brothers chased him crying, 'Kill the bird! Kill the bird!'

On Gangamari Hill lived the great Kittung. When he heard the noise of the brothers' shouting, he shot at the bird with an arrow and injured its left foot and it fell down on the hillside and turned into a stone.[1]

21

HILL SAORA

Gailung, Koraput District

Before Kannisum was born there was no epilepsy. One day Kittung went to bathe and as he was bathing he rubbed some dirt off his body and put it on a stone. Kannisum was born from it and burnt like fire. Kittung was frightened and put his head down and sat still. Kannisum said to Kittung, 'I've been born from your body; tell me what to do and where to live.' Kittung said, 'Go to Kindabul village and find the Chief's eldest son; go into his head, and make him fall down. When he is out of his senses, make him throw his hands and feet about as if he was a fowl. When this happens they will call the shaman and he'll order food for you. Then you can let the boy alone.'

22

HILL SAORA

Parisal, Ganjam District

Kinchayer Labarna Kittung is a Kittung of the hills. One day some Saoras went to hunt on the hill belonging to this

[1] The boy is now called Paikpanthu Kittung. He attacks babies and makes them ill. To cure a baby made ill by this Kittung the people carry out a branch of *karanji* wood, as if it was a corpse, and burn it on a little pyre. When this is done, the above story is recited.

Kittung. As they were going along in a line, beating the forest, a sambhar appeared but they found that they could not raise their guns or move from where they were standing.[1] When the sambhar disappeared, they found that they were free to move again.

One of the old men in the party got very thirsty and went to look for water. He found a spring in a cave and squatted down to drink. The Kittung came out from the cave dressed like a Raja and carrying a sword and a gun. The old man tried to escape but the Kittung caught him. 'Who gave you permission to hunt on my hill?' said he. The old man had nothing to say. The Kittung said, 'Bring me a red pot of liquor and a pig and a wooden gun and then you may hunt whenever you wish and you will always get something.'

The Saoras therefore brought a red pot of liquor and a pig and a wooden gun and that day they killed a deer and took it home and feasted on it.

That night the Kittung came to the village riding on his horse but when the people heard the clatter of its hoofs, many of them fell ill.

Since then we have put small wooden pillars in front of our houses that when the Kittung visits a village he can tether his horse.[2]

23

HILL SAORA

Dantara, Ganjam District

Cholera was the last disease to be created. At that time there were no ancestral ghosts and no Dangnasum. But when Mardisum, the cholera-demon, was born, the ghosts and Dangnasum were also born and they all lived together. But they found great difficulty in getting food and drink and one day they went together to Kittung and complained. Kittung said, 'Go to Barlung—there are many Saoras there and their shaman is Simo.

[1] It is commonly believed that a deity manifests itself by paralysing movement. Cf. my *The Muria and their Ghotul*, p. 248.

[2] These small pillars, tethering-pegs for the horses of this and other visiting deities, may be seen in many Saora villages.

Make the people there ill; the ghosts will give fever and Dangnasum and Mardisum will give loose motions and vomiting. When men begin to die, the shaman will be frightened and will call on you: there is your chance; ask for anything you want.'

The ghosts and demons went quickly to Barlung, where they gave the people cholera and killed twelve of them. When the shaman in trance saw the demons, they demanded goats and fowls for food, otherwise—they said—they would kill the whole village. The shaman agreed to satisfy their demands and they allowed the people to recover.

24

HILL SAORA

Kerubai, Koraput District

In the days before fever came to the world, people were very happy. When the time came for them to die, they died peacefully in their sleep.

There was a Saora called Tikara; he had a son. The boy in turn had three sons. After Tikara's death, his son performed the Guar rites. Five years later the ghost came and said it had nothing to eat or drink. The ghost went to Kittung and said, 'For five years I have had no food. Where are my children and grandchildren? I can't find them anywhere.' Kittung said, 'Go to your son and give him fever and he'll be frightened and give you all you want.' The ghost went and like wind entered his son's body and filled it with pain and fever. The son called Somri, the shaman: he came and the ghost said through him, 'I want a buffalo, fowls and a pig: otherwise I will not leave my son.' In this way fever came to the world.

25

HILL SAORA

Kankaraguda, Ganjam District

Originally Jamma Kittung lived in the Under World. All the gods were living behind his forehead. One day he looked round the Under World and thought how dark and miserable it was.

So he came up into the world at the place where black soil had been hardened by the sun and split into cracks. When he came up he looked like a dirty little orphan child. He wandered about until at last he came to a village where there lived a wealthy Chief. This Chief had one daughter who was very beautiful. Jamma Kittung went to the house and asked for work. But the Chief decided to keep him at his house to serve as husband for his daughter.

After some time the boy and the girl fell in love with one another. Jamma Kittung enchanted the Chief and made him ill with pains in his feet. The girl said, 'What can we do to cure my father?' 'Take some rice to a shaman,' said the boy, 'and he will tell you what is the matter.' The boy put some rice in a little basket, made a mark on the Chief's forehead with it, and went, not to a shaman, but to a secret place by a stream. Here he himself cooked and ate the rice and returned home.

The girl asked him what the shaman said. And the boy replied, 'The shaman told me that it is Labosum who has made him ill and that we must offer him a pig on the path outside the village.' The girl said, 'Take a pig and go outside the village and sacrifice it immediately.' The boy took the pig and after sacrificing it ate all the flesh himself and returned home.

As a result of this sacrifice the pains in the Chief's feet were cured, but now he got a pain in his chest. The girl again sent the boy to see the shaman and again instead of going there the boy went to a secret place by a stream and cooked and ate the rice himself and then returned home. This time he said that it was Karnosum who had caused the pain and that they must sacrifice a black goat and build a shrine in front of their house. Once again the boy, after sacrificing the goat, ate all the meat himself and returned home. The next day the Chief found that he had no pain in his chest, but that his head was aching. In this way the boy made places for every god to live in and daily got meat for himself to eat. Slowly the Chief's strength was exhausted by constant illness and his wealth diminished by daily sacrifices.

But one day the girl became suspicious and she followed the

boy when he pretended to go to a shaman and she saw him cooking and eating the rice himself. When he came home she said to him 'All our wealth has been exhausted by your trickery. You enjoy yourself and you do no work. Now go and labour in the forest clearing and I will bring you your food.'

When the boy was safely out of the way, the girl herself took rice to the shaman and he discovered that the boy was really Jamma Kittung and had come from the Under World. 'Until this boy dies,' he said, 'your father will go on being ill.' He gave the girl some poison and told her to put it in the boy's liquor and said that when he was dead, she should call for him. When the boy returned home the girl gave him the poisoned liquor to drink and he died. The shaman came and burned the boy's body with magic wood which consumed everything but the head. They piled wood upon it and lit it time and again until they were exhausted, but nothing would destroy it. At last the shaman picked up a stick and broke the skull open with a great crash. Immediately the gods that had been living there came pouring out and each flew away to his own place. Then only was the head consumed, but all the mourners who were present died.

26

HILL SAORA

Gailung, Koraput District

When the gods were born, each went to his own place and did his own business. On Tamchaya Hill lived Tupru Saora. He made a clearing and sowed pulse.

Rugaboi[1] was born under a shrub of pulse and when the Saora went to see his crop he found her like a young girl and took her to his house. She worked for him, got him water and cleaned his house.

One day the Saora took his pulses and beans to the bazaar. All the other villagers went ahead but Rugaboi lagged behind. On the way a Dom and a Saora caught her and stole the pulses

[1] Rugaboi, also known as Lurnisum and Thakurani, is the smallpox deity.

she was carrying. She was very angry and changed her appearance to that of a goddess. The Dom and Saora dropped their baskets and ran for their lives.

Rugaboi went to Kittung and told him what had happened and Kittung said, 'You can have your revenge by giving swellings like beans and maize on their bodies. They will sacrifice to you and you will get your food.' Rugaboi went back and entered into the bodies of the Dom and Saora and gave them smallpox. They called the shaman and he made a chariot, put every kind of grain into it, took it out of the village and sacrificed a pig. Rugaboi was satisfied and the pestilence abated.

27

HILL SAORA

Kerubai, Koraput District

There were many Saoras in Tubursing. Kappara Saora was Chief. He had five sons. There was a shamanin called Roisan; she was young and a widow. Roisan and the Chief's eldest son were in love with each other. The boy was unmarried. Roisan said, 'Don't marry anyone else, but keep me as your wife.' But he married another girl and he forgot Roisan. She was angry and called Siyurasum[1] and said, 'Go to the Chief's eldest son and drive him mad. Drive him out of his house and make him wander in the jungle. Don't let him return unless he gives you a fat pig.' That night Siyurasum went to the boy in the form of wind; he entered his body and woke him up. When the boy saw his wife lying by his side, he thought she was a tiger and took his sword and killed her. He ran out of his house and Siyurasum led him far into the jungle. The parents called the shamanin but she refused to come.

After two months the shamanin went to their house and called Siyurasum and he brought the boy back. He gave Siyurasum a pig and he left him and he recovered and now at last he married the shamanin.

[1] The Saora verb *siyur* means to reel or to be infatuated. *Siyurboban* is vertigo, *siyurmadan* is giddiness or fainting. *Siyurasum* is therefore the god or demon who infatuates or drives people mad.

But Siyurasum finding that he could earn his living in this way, went from place to place driving people mad.

28

HILL SAORA

Ladde, Koraput District

In the days before gods and the Dead troubled men, there were no priests. But in time the gods were born for every caste and they began to trouble them and men fell ill.

Baori Saora lived alone on Jungor Hill; he had no wife or child. When Kittung saw that men were troubled by the gods he came to find someone whom he could make a priest to help them. No one was ready to do it, but when Kittung met Baori he said, 'I'll make you a priest to protect and heal men. Come with me.' Baori said, 'How can I do this? I am ignorant.' Kittung put rice in a new fan and liquor in a new earthen pot and gave Baori goats, fowls, pigs and sent him to Anglur village. There he sacrificed to the gods and they were pleased and let men be.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

THE SOUL AND DREAMS

1

GADABA

Onagelu, Koraput District

So long as the soul lived alone in the body, men had no dreams. But one day the soul went to Ispur Mahaprabhu and said to him, 'I am all alone and I am often nervous and afraid. Give me a watchman to keep me company.' Ispur gave it a mustard seed and said, 'This will be your watchman.' Since that day, when the soul sleeps, the watchman remains awake. It goes out of the body and travels here and there; then it comes home and tells the soul what it has seen. The story of its adventures is a dream.

2

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

Betta Pinnu comes in dreams in the form of a beautiful girl and sleeps with you. This is auspicious and good, and the man will have profit, good crops and luck in hunting. To get such dreams the Konds sacrifice to Betta Pinnu.

3

KOND

Dengsargi, Koraput District

There was a man and his wife. They had no children. The wife died. The man buried her. But afterwards she came in the form of a woman and slept with her husband and bore him children. She always left before cock-crow and returned to the grave. He never saw her face, for it was dark, and he believed it was like what it was before.

When the man was out, the woman used to come to the house,

cook and eat, but always left enough for him. The man would come home and eat. One day he had a longing to see his wife's face. He hid somewhere and when she came he saw she had great teeth and long breasts. He was afraid she would eat him one day. He heated some lac. That evening when the woman was cooking, he threw the hot lac into her eyes and blinded her: she fled to her grave. She could not see the way back and became an ordinary ghost.

4

KUTTIA KOND

Kumrabali, Ganjam District

When people increased in number, Nirantali arranged for them to live in different places. Lingantali and Janartali, Kutimai and Kabarmai thought, 'When men are asleep they know nothing, but let us devise some means that they may see their friends and relatives from afar. We will make dreams.' They tried but it was no use.

Then Nirantali said, 'Kill a lizard.' They killed a lizard and carried it out weeping as if it was a man and cremated it as if it was a man. After three days this lizard became a ghost. Lingantali and the others said to it, 'At night take any form you please and go to visit men. If you know someone is coming next day, take his form. If you know someone is going to die, take the form of two trees meeting.' This is how dreams began.

5

HILL SAORA

Kinteda, Ganjam District

When an unmarried girl dies,[1] her ghost does not go to her parents, but to Dubla Kittung and says, 'Where shall I live?' The Kittung says, 'At night, wherever unmarried youths sleep. Go to them in their dreams, sleep with them and make love with

[1] There is a belief throughout tribal, indeed perhaps throughout village, India that the ghosts of these who die unmarried come in dreams to find the satisfaction that was denied them while they were on earth.

them.' He gives the ghost fine clothes and sends it to the world and during the night it does its work.

To stop these dreams, a boy should offer a fowl and liquor. This will keep a ghost quiet for five or six months.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

THE COMING OF DEATH

I

BINJHWAR

Pondipalli, Sambalpur District

There was a city. A Saora and his wife lived there. They had a daughter. When she was ten years old, her parents died. The girl lived alone. So many days passed, and she grew up. A Saora came to marry her from Amphapur and she agreed, but not, she said, for six months.

After the youth had gone home she went to the place where her parents were buried and called to them. They came up in human form, as they had been before, and asked, 'Why have you roused us after so long?' She said, 'A Saora from Amphapur wants to marry me.' They said, 'Well, marry him.' And they blessed her saying, 'When the messengers of death come for anyone, you'll be able to see them with your eyes, and they will listen to whatever you say.'

The girl went home and sent word to Amphapur to the Saora to come and marry her. He did so and took her to his home. She spent six months in her father-in-law's house and then her husband fell ill. The messengers of death came to carry off his soul, but the girl saw them and begged them to leave him for three months more. They said, 'If we don't take him, Jam Raja will punish us.' The girl said, 'Then don't go home. I'll give you somewhere to stay.' She had a buffalo called Jakmaklo. Its horns were five cubits long. The girl went to it and said, 'Hide these messengers in your horns.' The buffalo said, 'Take off my horns; let the messengers sit on my head and put the horns on again.' The girl took off the buffalo's horns, persuaded the messengers to sit on its head, and put the horns on again.

When the messengers did not come back, Jam Raja grew anxious and ordered a search, but he got no news of them. Then he sent other messengers to Amphapur and they carried off the Saora's soul and he died. The parents performed the proper ceremonies.

Some time afterwards the girl went to Antamori Hill and brought twelve measures of *mahua* flowers. She put them in a wax bin and after six days made a hearth of *gur*; she used elephant's tusks as firewood. She put the *mahua* in a golden pot and set peacock's quills as the pipes. She distilled eleven-and-a-half bottles of liquor and gave it to the mourners.

In the evening when they were sitting drinking, Jam Raja came as a Saora with five chaprasis and that night a full hundred men drank the liquor. They were drunk and the talk was very free. The girl too was drunk and said, 'Look how I put Jam Raja's messengers in the horns of my buffalo and how I've made a hundred men drunk on eleven-and-a-half bottles of liquor.' Jam Raja asked her to show him how she had done it. She took him to the buffalo and proudly took off the horns and the messengers escaped.

Jam Raja was pleased and said, 'Always drink liquor, for then you'll always tell the truth.'[1]

2

BONDO

Basupada, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu planted a mango tree in his own garden. This mango used to bear fruit all the twelve months of the year and the sky-dwellers lived on it.

When Mahaprabhu first created men on earth and filled it with living creatures, they did not die and the earth got too crowded. Mahaprabhu tried hard to send death to the world but he could not think how to do it. He did not eat for three days and his wife asked, 'Why are you not eating?' When he told her, she said, 'Eat and I'll show you what to do.' Mahaprabhu sat down to eat saying, 'First tell me what to do and afterwards I'll put food in my mouth.' She said, 'Take five

[1] A similar story is told by the Dhobas of Mandla (MMI, pp. 418 f.). In the Dhoba story the messenger is imprisoned in a hollow cotton tree; liquor is invented in a different way; and the plot turns on the relations of two friends instead of husband and wife. There is also a Warli story with the same general theme (MMI, p. 412).

mangoes from the tree and put the seed of death in them and plant them in man's world.' Mahaprabhu agreed that this was a good plan and ate a hearty meal. He sent the mangoes with Bhimai to Bali Hill. Bhimai planted them and the trees grew: after twelve years they bore fruit and Mahaprabhu gave one to Sukro Sisa to eat and said, 'This is a mango; plant it in your house.' It was only when they ate the mangoes that men began to die.

3

GADABA

Boronga; Koraput District

At first men did not die. This made things very difficult for a god called Kalanka Deota. This god had many lesser gods as his servants, and these gods could not eat anything except human corpses. But since nobody died, they could not get anything to eat, so they were always hungry. They did their work, but they were hungry as they did it.

Many days passed and the gods grew weaker and weaker. They did their best, but they could not work properly. Kalanka Deota said to them, 'Why are you working so badly nowadays?' 'Because we get nothing to eat,' they answered.

Kalanka Deota went to his sister, Halangkar. She had just given birth to a daughter and was lying on the ground exhausted. Kalanka picked up the child and took her home. There he killed her, ground the bones to powder and made it into bread. He took the form of an old Mali woman and went from village to village selling the bread to men. They bought it, and whoever took and ate it, died. In this way death came to the world, and the gods were satisfied.

4

GOND

Barangel, Ganjam District

When Mahaprabhu first caused men to be born, there were fifty-three crores of them. But then none were born and none

died to increase or lessen the number, for they were immortal. Mahaprabhu made the life-fly, an immortal fly, and when it bit a man he could not die.

Mahaprabhu gave the throne of Jampur to Jam Raja, who ruled for twelve years, but in all that time he did not receive a single report of life or death. Jam Raja was annoyed at this and he went to Mahaprabhu and said, 'You made me a Raja, but no one comes to me, no one reports to me; what kind of kingdom is this?' Mahaprabhu took some dirt from his body and made a crow and said to it, 'Go to the land of men and find the life-fly, catch it and bring it to me.' The bird flew to the world and brought the fly. Mahaprabhu shut it up in a room.

After this, when Jam Raja's messengers went for men's lives, they were able to take them away. As many as died, so many were born.

5

JHORIA

Pittayigaon, Koraput District

Before death came to the world, men did not spit.

There was a time when men and gods fought against each other. Mahaprabhu sent the gods to the Middle World, but men beat them and drove them away. Mahaprabhu then called a council, to which he invited both the parties. He put the water of immortality in one gourd and the water of death in another. Among the men who came to the council was an old fellow who had no ears. He tottered over to the gourds and picked up the one containing the water of immortality. He took a sip of it, but before he could swallow it, Mahaprabhu thrust a horse's tail into his mouth and he spat it out. Mahaprabhu then gave the water of immortality to the gods and the water of death to men. In this way men learnt how to spit, but they also began to die.

6

SAORA

Kangaon, Sambalpur District

Janglu Saora and his wife lived in Singarpalli. They had two daughters. The elder was married, but not the younger. But the elder girl's husband left her and went to another land and she wept so much that she became blind. The younger daughter grew up and fell in love with a Binjhwar boy. This went on for a long time and at last they married. In those days Saoras and Binjhwars intermarried.

The Chief's son of Singarpalli was also in love with this girl, but she did not care for him. So the Chief's son plotted to turn the Binjhwar boy out of the village and again and again sent his servants to beat him. But nothing could kill him, for in those days men were immortal. So the Chief's son called the villagers and began to defame the boy to his father-in-law. 'Your son-in-law is in love with his wife's elder sister and through his sin we will starve.' People laughed at the poor boy and abused him. Janglu was angry and took the blind girl to the forest and left her there.

The girl went to Binjhbasni Devi and told her what had happened. 'As I have come stumbling through the jungle, let all men trip and stumble on the path of death,' she said. Binjhbasni Devi took some dirt from her throat and made a death-bird and let it fly into the air. It flew to Singarpalli; it went round the village three times, then sat on a tree in the middle. It screamed and screamed and when the people heard it they fell ill and began to die. Thus death came to the world.

But the bears and tigers looked after the blind girl and in time her eyes opened and the gods took her to the sky and made every kind of ornament for her. She still lives there as the rainbow.

PART FIVE: THE SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS OF MAN

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

THE ORIGIN OF TRIBES AND CASTES

1

BHATTRA

Chitabera, Koraput District

There was long ago a Gond called Narsingh who had one daughter unmarried. She loved a youth and presently because of it she had to give up bathing. At seven or eight months her belly looked very big and people said, 'Here is an unmarried girl with a big belly', and she felt ashamed, so much that she never went out in the presence of others, but got up early to dig for roots and came secretly home in the evening.

When the girl's time was fulfilled she went as usual to dig for roots and there a son was born and she left him in the hole out of which she had got her roots. In the evening she came home leaving the boy behind. Presently Jam Deota came through the forest and found him. He took him to Mahaprabhu and said, 'I found him in a root-pit.' Mahaprabhu said, 'Take the child and give him to Narsingh Gond and he will look after him till he grows up and then I'll make arrangements for him.' Jam Deota therefore took the child to Narsingh. When the child grew up Mahaprabhu came and said, 'Has he a father or mother?' 'No,' they said. 'He was born from a root-pit, so his caste is Bhattra.'[1]

2

BONDO

Kirsanipadar, Koraput District

Once a tiger ate an entire village of Bondos. Only one boy was left. That boy went to his clearing and put a pole there

[1] This seems to be a pun on *kodra*, root-pit, and Bhottoda or Bhattra.

and tied a rope to it. He went some distance away and dug a pit. He hid in this and pulled the rope, making a *karaphari* noise. The tiger heard the noise and thought it must be some man. It found the rope and followed it to the pit and pulled the boy out. 'Why are you hiding?' 'Because I'm afraid of you?' 'You may well be. I'll eat you: who will save you?' The boy said, 'Very well, eat me.' The tiger said, 'I can't eat uncooked food: I must have cooked food.' So the boy went to a man's house. There was no fire, but the boy heard a noise as of something cooking. He went back to the tiger and told it. The tiger said to the boy, 'Well, stay here and I'll go and see.'

There was a woman in the house and the tiger pulled her out and ate her. It said to the boy, 'Go back to the same house and look there.' The boy went and now no one was there and he returned and told the tiger. The tiger said, 'My food always cooks of itself before I eat it. But today I'll let you go.'

From this boy, the whole Bondo tribe began.[1]

3

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

Twelve Gadaba brothers were born in the Godaveri District. When they grew up they came to Jeypore in search of wives, saying, 'Wherever we find wives, there we will live.' On their way from the Godaveri District, they passed through the Iskindha Forest. An Asurin lived there. She had no parents, she lived alone. She had great ears, long teeth and nails, an enormous nose; from her great head her hair hung down to the ground. Her tongue was very long and had hair growing from it. When the brothers saw her she was lying naked and asleep on the ground.

When they saw her, the brothers said, 'Ugly she may be, but she is a woman. If one of us takes her, it will be good.' The eldest asked each of them in turn, 'Will you have her?' and each replied, 'I dare not; she will devour me.' So in the end the eldest

[1] For other myths of origin of this tribe, see my *Bondo Highlander*, pp. 2 ff.

brother said, 'Very well then. I'll marry her myself. But you must all help me catch her.'

The brothers caught the Asurin and held her down, while they made holes in her ears and tied her with bark rope. They tied *kudal* wood round her waist and tied her hair in plaits. All this time the Asurin remained asleep. Then the boys pulled at the ropes through her ears and she awoke. When she saw the boys she screamed with delight. 'All these days I've been hungry,' she cried. 'Now I've got something to eat.' When the brothers heard this they pulled strongly on the ropes and the pain frightened the Asurin. 'Don't hurt me,' she said. 'I won't eat you.'

But the boys did not dare release her, and they dragged her along with them. For several days they gave her no food and she got very weak. Then they cut her ears until they were of an ordinary size; they pulled the hair out of her tongue and broke off the great teeth. Then the Asurin said, 'Release me now. I won't run away.' But they refused.

The eldest brother took her as his wife, and in time she conceived and gave birth to a boy and a girl. The brothers thought, 'Now that she has children, she's not going to run away.' They made big rings of bark rope for her ears, so that it would be easy to catch her if she did. They tied her hair with a bent stick into a loop for the same reason. They tied a piece of wood to her backside.[1]

Then the eleven brothers said to the eldest brother, 'Now

[1] Gadaba women still wear large brass ear-rings, do their hair round a loop of wood and wear a bustle of many strands of fibre-cord tied together. Another tradition of the origin of the bustle is given by the *Koraput District Gazetteer* (Bell, p. 75): 'A goddess visited a Gadaba village incognito and asked leave of one of the women to rest on a cot. She was brusquely told that the proper seat for beggars was the floor; and she consequently decreed that henceforth all Gadaba women should wear a bustle to remind them to avoid churlishness.' Thurston (Vol. II, p. 245) gives the following story to account for the dress of Gadaba women: When Rama during his banishment was wandering in the forests of Dandaka, his wife Sita accompanied him in spite of his entreaties to the contrary. It was one of the cruel terms of his stepmother Kaika that Rama should wear only clothing made from jungle fibre, before leaving the capital. According to the Hindu religion, a virtuous wife must share both the sorrows and joys of her lord. Consequently Sita followed the example of Rama, and wore the same kind of clothing. They then left the capital amidst the loud lamentation of the citizens. During their wanderings, they met some Gadaba women, who mocked and laughed at Sita. Whereupon she cursed them, and condemned them to wear no other dress but the cloth made of fibre.'

you have a wife and children, you stay here. We are going to find women for ourselves.' So saying, they went away.

The children of the Asurin were real Gadabas. The eldest brother later took another wife and her children were Parengas. We say now that we are children of the same father but of different mothers.

4

GADABA

Badural, Koraput District

The villagers of Badural say, 'We are Rana Gadabas.' For long ago in Musri village there were seven Rana brothers. Their parents were dead and they lived alone. One day these seven brothers were threshing grain and the youngest was driving the bullocks round and round. When the work was done he loosed the bullocks; the boy was tired and lay down on a pile of chaff and fell asleep. The other brothers were busy piling up the chaff and completely covered the youngest boy. They winnowed the grain, finished off all the work and only then, when they sat down to rest, did they notice that the youngest brother was not there.

They went here and there to find him. When they could get no news of him anywhere, they thought of looking in the chaff and began to poke about in the piles of straw and chaff with their ox-goads. For a long time they could not find him but then at last the eldest brother accidentally thrust his goad right through the boy's stomach and killed him.

The six brothers were very frightened for fear they would be arrested and they left everything they had and ran away to Badural. At that time this was a lonely place and there were no villages near by. Only an old man called Sikiliya and his wife were living there all by themselves. This old man was a Gadaba. When they saw the six brothers miserable and hungry the old man and his wife felt pity for them and took them into their house.

The old man had a buffalo. When it came in that night and the old man went to milk it, he found that it had no milk. But next day when the buffalo went to graze towards Jeypore, it gave a

great deal of milk, and the old man found many fish, crabs and prawns clinging to its tail. He thought, 'If we go and live where this buffalo has been grazing, we'll get all we want to eat.' Next day the old man and his wife went away following their buffalo and left their house to the six brothers.

The six brothers went to Gadput for wives. The people there said, 'We are Gadabas. But if you will eat beef as we do, we will give you our daughters in marriage.' The six brothers did so, and since then their families have been Rana Gadabas.

5

GADABA

Gunaipada, Koraput District

The twelve Gadaba brothers were born on the banks of the Godaveri River. One day they went to hunt in the forest, and as they went the eldest brother felt very thirsty. The youngest brother was carrying a gourd full of millet-gruel in a carrying-stick. The eldest brother sat down and began to drink some of the gruel. The other ten brothers went on, leaving these two behind. They presently came to a sago palm and drank the juice.

Meanwhile a horse, sent by Mahaprabhu, came to where the eldest and youngest brothers were sitting. The eldest brother caught it but when he tried to mount it the horse attacked him. He said to the youngest boy, 'Put the gruel down for a moment and hold the horse for me. I will go and get a bamboo ladder and will mount with that.' The youngest boy held the horse and the other went to find a bamboo for a ladder.

But while he was away the youngest boy got onto the horse and galloped away. When the eldest brother returned to the place there was no horse and no brother. So he picked up the carrying-stick with the gruel and followed the marks of the horse's feet. The other ten brothers joined him and they all went along after the horse's tracks to the Jeypore Hills. But the youngest boy got there first and became the Raja of the place.

When the eldest brother arrived with his load and the people heard what had happened, they called him Bhoi Gadaba. The

youngest brother married the daughter of the Raja of Jeypore. But they could not find a wife for the eldest brother. He sent his sepoys to find a wife and they went to the Godaveri River. There they found a girl called Tarki Asurin. They tried to catch her but she bit them. At last however they held her down and making holes in her ears, tied her with long strips of *siāri* creeper, and so took her to the Raja. The eldest brother married her, and gave her golden rings in place of the creeper with which they had tied her ears. After a time the girl longed for the jungle and ran away to the hills. The eldest brother followed for love of her. He was the first Asur Gadaba.

Formerly the Gadabas used to carry loads of food for the Raja and so they were Bhoi Gadabas. In those days there were no Ronas, Malis, Gaurs, Brahmins. But in these days the Raja only takes food from the high castes; he will no more eat from the hands of Gadabas.

Then ten other brothers were named Kond, Bondo, Didayi, Jhoria, Parenga, Konda Dora, Holar, Pengu, Chileri, and Maria.

6

GOND

Chacharaguda, Koraput District

When the world was first made, there were no men or gods. Bara Pen came to earth and went everywhere but he could find no living creatures. At last he went to live on Gurighat Hill. In that jungle was a wild cow. He caught it and kept it with him. It had no calf, yet milk flowed from its udders and he fed on it. One day the cow's two forefeet struck a rock and were injured. Bara Pen bathed the feet daily and put medicine on the wounds. One day as he was bathing them, from the wound on the right foot came a boy and from the wound on the left foot came a girl. Bara Pen looked after the children and fed them on cow's milk.

When the children grew up, they married each other and Bara Pen said, 'From today regard me as a god and worship me. As you were born from a cow's foot (*god*), so you will be called Gond.'

7

JHORIA

Sukku, Koraput District

The two brothers Deoguni and Nirguni lived on the Khutnimala Hill. Deoguni used to play on the flute and Nirguni on the fiddle. They were unmarried. They used to wander from hill to hill playing their flute and fiddle, but there was none to hear them but the trees and grass; they never met any human beings.

Presently the brothers began to feel the need of women. They continued to make their music but all the time they were thinking about women. One day in their wanderings they came to Godsila, a great and high mountain covered with rocks which gave it the appearance of a temple.

Deoguni said to Nirguni, 'Let us climb this mountain and see if we can see any human beings from the summit.' When they reached the top they saw far away a curl of smoke rising from the forest below them. Nirguni said to Deoguni, 'There is nothing but smoke.' Deoguni said to Nirguni, 'Let us go towards the smoke.' They went down and through the forest until they came to a great rock. They climbed it and saw two women. One of them had the teeth of a pig and ears big as winnowing-fans. She had a long nose and her hair hung down to her knees. The other woman was very pretty, like an ordinary woman.

Deoguni said, 'At last we have found women, but what is the good of that if they devour us?' Nirguni said, 'You are the elder and I will do whatever you say. If they do not devour us, we will marry them. But now let us play our instruments.' So Deoguni began to play on his flute and Nirguni on his fiddle, and when they heard the sweet music all the beasts and birds of the forest began to dance. When the music entered the ears of the two women they tried to see who was making it, but all they could see was the whole forest dancing round them.

'We have never seen anything like this before,' they said, and they too began to dance and forgot all about their food and drink.

When the brothers saw that the women too were dancing, they went towards them, still playing on their instruments as they went. But the women were so absorbed in dancing that they did not notice their approach. Then Deoguni made a rope of *siāri* creeper and tied up the older ugly woman, piercing her ears and passing the rope through them. He tied a bit of *kudal* wood to her backside and put heavy wooden rings round her feet. But she did not even notice what they were doing to her, so absorbed was she in her dancing.

Then said Deoguni 'I am the elder and I must marry the elder woman. You shall marry the younger.' Nirguni was very pleased at that.

Dancing, dancing, the brothers brought the two women home. There they suddenly stopped their music and the women stopped dancing and at last realized that two men were with them. They were terrified and tried to run away, but the brothers held the elder woman by the ropes through her ears and the younger would not leave her.

For several days the brothers starved the two women until at last they agreed to be their wives. 'What will you eat?' asked Deoguni. 'Raw meat,' said the elder woman. They fed her on raw meat, but they gave the younger girl roots and leaves. The elder woman forced Deoguni to eat raw meat with her. 'I will not marry you unless you eat the same food,' she said.

Then the two brothers began to play their instruments again and soon twelve score boys and twelve score girls assembled and danced. But when the elder woman saw them she cried, 'Now at last here is some really good food,' and she rushed at them with her great mouth wide open. They ran for their lives and Nirguni and his wife ran too.

When they were alone, Deoguni threw his wife on the ground and cut off her great ears and knocked out her teeth. He took her with him towards the Dudma Falls and there they had many children who have become today the Gadabas and Parengas.

But from Nirguni and his wife there sprang a race of kings, and the Maharaja of Jeypore is one of their descendants.

8

JHORIA

Lamda, Koraput District

A Mali and his wife lived in Tabraput. They had no children and lived lonely in a little hut all by itself in the forest. But when she was very old, the Malin conceived. One day, as her time was drawing near, she went to catch fish and as she was deep in the water her pains began and the boy was born there in the stream. She carried the child, with the placenta and the cord, back to the house. She called the boy Jhoria because he was born in a *jhoria* [stream].[1] When the boy was eight or nine years old, the parents died. He did not know what his caste was; all he knew was that his parents used to say to him, 'Jhoria Jhoria'. He was living all by himself in a little hut when a Gadaba found him and took him home. The boy grew up in the Gadaba's house and when people asked what his caste was he would reply 'Jhoria', and when they asked what his name was he would again reply 'Jhoria'. In this way the Jhoria tribe began.

9

JUANG

Kirtanpur, Dhenkanal

Long ago the seven Kaniya sisters came to the Middle World to dance with Rusi. Sainya Burha and his wife kept a boy called Cheriatoka to graze their goats. Sainya Burha said, 'Grandson, go and dance with them.' Cheriatoka got ready and went with his tambourine. But they said to him, 'You are an eater of food. How can you dance with us?' The boy said, 'Then I won't eat either, if only I may dance with you.' They danced and so many days passed. Rusi was pleased. He said, 'Now many days have passed. I will make a house here.' He made a hut of leaves, and they lived there, spending their days dancing.

[1] Hislop and Dalton both agree in deriving the name Jhoria from *jhodi*, a brook. Hislop, Part I, p. 7; Dalton, p. 278.

One day Rusi and the seven Kaniya sisters and Cheriatoka went to bathe. When they had done, Rusi and the seven Kaniyas went back to their hut and Cheriatoka went to Sainya Burha's house. When the old man saw him he said, 'Grandson, you've been away a very long time. What have you been eating all this time? You must be very hungry. Come and take some rice.' The boy said, 'No, I can't. There is a rule. If we eat we can't dance.' The old man said, 'But how are they to know? Take just a little and don't tell them.' The boy ate and returned to Rusi's house.

When he got there he found the seven Kaniyas massaging Rusi's arms and legs. The youngest sister looked at the boy and love took her; they planned to run away together. Cheriatoka belched before Rusi and Rusi said, 'You've been eating something.' The boy said, 'No, I haven't.' Rusi said, 'Put your head under the water of the stream and bring it up again.' The girls took the boy down to the river and forced his head under water. He had to fill his mouth with water and as he spat it out grains of rice came with it. Rusi wanted to kill him. The boy said to his girl, 'Only you can save me.' The girl said, 'Come then, let's run away together.' Away they went, but Rusi heard of it and pursued them with his sword in hand. When the boy heard him coming he left the girl and ran on ahead.

That girl had four legs. That is how the Kaniya sisters could dance so well day after day. Rusi hit her and cut off one of the legs. She could go no further and turned into Malyagiri Mountain. The blood spurted into the air and some drops fell on the boy. He turned into Cheriatoka Mountain. Then Rusi went home and made a tambourine in the dance house.

After Sainya Burha and his wife heard that Rusi had killed their grandson they had twelve sons and twelve daughters. These too went to Rusi. Rusi made tambourines for the boys and taught them to dance. But Rusi was afraid that the boys might kill him, for daily the twelve girls used to massage his arms and legs. So he took six of the boys with him and went to his own place. The rest stayed with the girls in the dance-house. They called it Darbar and from that day there was a house in every village for the boys and girls.

10

KONDA DORA

Turiya, Koraput District

On Arehan Hill lived Singarpo, a Dora. Every day he went for roots to the jungle. Husband and wife grew old, digging and eating roots and they had no child. One day they went to Rakesaltipli, a hill where there were many roots and there found a *makkāl-kānda* root. As they dug it up, from below the root emerged a child with placenta and cord and they took him home. When the boy grew up, they called him *Kānda* (root). They married him to a monkey's daughter and then the old parents died. From the boy and monkey a son and daughter were born. Then the monkey-girl died. From the children the Kond tribe began.

11

KOND

Charcharganna, Ganjam District

A Kond was born from the belly of a she-goat. He grew up drinking its milk. One day he met Jaonra Pinnu and went to live with him. So many days passed. Jaonra Pinnu wondered how to find a wife for the Kond boy. He brought earth from an ant-hill and made a doll with it, putting a *bel* fruit as its head, a bit of *sarai* wood as backbone, arms of bamboo, fingers of turmeric roots, a *karela* as nose, red seeds as eyes, a little fish as tongue, mushrooms for ears, oranges for breasts. With his tweezers he made a hole for the vagina. He put a deer's liver in the belly and the doll became alive.

Jaonra Pinnu gave her to the Kond as wife and she lived with him. The Kond's name was Ururengan and the wife's, Pusarani. When they had children they were called Ankiya Konds.[1]

[1] Thurston gives other stories of the origin of the Konds. 'At the beginning, when the ground was still wet, two women Karaboodi and Tharthaboodi came from the interior of the earth. Each had a son: one was Kasarodi, the other Singarodi. They brought with them two small plants. One day, when Karaboodi was cutting these plants for cooking, she accidentally cut

12

KUTTIA KOND

Surangbaro, Ganjam District

The Konds were born in Saphaganna-Karanja. First Nirantali-Kapantali was born, then Paramugatti-Mangragatti, then Ururengan, Penarengan, Berandar and Karadar, then Karasan and Burasan, then Otesaru and Otemeru, then Timmadalei and Timmameru, then Berladaku and Berlamami, then Sarasikka and Saranaringa, then Timake and Nonruka, then Karanjaka and Bhorika, then Miring-gera and Sominguira—to tell all the names would take seven days. Thus many people were born. They all went to Baringanna, except Nirantali and Paramugatti who stayed on in Saphaganna-Karanja.

The people scattered in all directions. In those days the hills were very high and the forest was dense; it was always dark, there was no sun. The travellers could not find their way because of the darkness; they sat where they were. Then the seven suns rose into the sky and the forest was burnt and the great mountains became small; the world was levelled and all men died.

But Nirantali and Paramugatti survived. One day Nirantali said to Paramugatti, 'How many men were born with us! But where are they all now? Let us go and find them. You go to the East and I will go to the West. If you find a woman marry her, if I find a man I will marry him.' Accordingly they separated and after long wandering through the world they met

the little finger of her left hand, and the blood dropped on the ground. Instantly, the wet soft earth on which it fell became dry and hard. The woman then cooked the food, and gave some of it to her son, who asked her why it tasted so much sweeter than usual. She replied that she might have a dream that night, and, if so, would let him know. Next morning, the woman told him that, if he would act on her advice, he would prosper in this world, that he was not to think of her as his mother, and was to cut away the flesh of her back, dig several holes in the ground, bury the flesh and cover the holes with stones. This her son did, and the rest of the body was cremated. The wet soil dried up and became hard, and all kinds of animals and trees came into existence. A partridge scratched the ground with its feet, and millet, maize, pulse and rice sprang forth from it. The brothers argued that since the sacrifice of their mother had been so fruitful, they must sacrifice their brothers, sisters and others once a year in future.'—Thurston, Vol. III, pp. 368 f.

without having seen any other living creature, and as each was alone, they married one another.

Then they said, 'Look, we are man and wife, but also we are brother and sister, so how can we lie together and how will children be born of us?' They killed a lizard and burnt it. Its ghost went into Nirantali's belly and twins, a boy and a girl, were born from her. When they grew up they married each other and all mankind came from them.

In those days men looked like monkeys. They lived in the mountains and cut down the trees of the forest as they desired. There was no grain and Paramugatti searched everywhere to get some. On a tree he found a silk cocoon. He picked it and put it with red and blue flowers for seven days in a pool of water. At the end of that time he found that it was full of seed and he gave it to the Konds and they sowed it in their clearings.

13

MURIA

Chhindiguda, Koraput District

In Warangal lived the Bhattra caste; in those days there were no Murias. After a time the Bhattras decided to leave Warangal and only five Pengu Porojas were left there. One of them, Jurgu, had his wife pregnant and she fell ill. When the day for her delivery came, she died and they took the body out and threw it away.

Fifteen days later, a child was born from the rotting corpse and lay down with its cord and placenta beside it. A Gour was grazing cattle there and seeing the child went to the village and asked whose it was. The people took it to the village and fed it on cow's-milk: it grew up, but they would not let it go into their houses or touch their pots. They called the boy Muria because he was born of a *maré hue aurat*. When he was big enough, he married a Pengu girl and his children were the first members of the Muria tribe.

14

PARENGA

Dumriput, Koraput District

A merchant had a very lovely daughter. One day he took his daughter and bullocks to Nandpur and camped there. Rama and Lakshman Mahaprabhu were there. These two Mahaprabhus, seeing the girl, were pleased and she was too. Love grew between them. Both Mahaprabhus seduced her and she conceived. After that she never went out of the camp. The two Mahaprabhus were afraid the merchant would kill them. But during his absence the girl gave birth to twins. Lakshman Mahaprabhu tore off a bit of her dress, tied them up in it and took them off to the jungle. He left the younger under a pipal tree and the elder under a sago palm. When the girl saw the children gone, she thought, 'Let me die too,' and begged the earth to open. A crack appeared and she went down. The Mahaprabhus ran to catch her. But she went down and ran under the earth to Kappor Chua, where Lakshman caught her by her hair and pulled her up. There he bathed her and took her away.

At that time a Dom was Raja and all men honoured him. There was an old Beng Raja and Beng Rani. They had no children. They went to dig roots in the jungle. They came to the pipal tree and found the boy playing. Pleased, they took him home. When the boy grew up, Beng Raja prepared to go to the Dom Raja to pay his taxes. The boy wanted to go too. Beng Raja tried to stop him but he insisted. They reached the palace and Beng Raja saluted with his hands, and the boy with his foot. Dom Raja was very angry and wanted to kill him. The boy seeing this got his bamboo bow and arrow and killed the Dom Raja and the whole army and became Raja instead.

One day he went hunting and came to the sago palm. There he found his brother, and thought, 'I'll keep him to carry my loads.' The Raja took him home. The boy sometimes went to the jungle. The Raja thought, 'He goes mad like this because he has no wife.' He went to get him a wife.

Now after Rama and Lakshman left Kappor Chua with the girl, she bore a daughter who tried to devour her. Lakshman

Mahaprabhu caught the girl and she tore his arm with her teeth. He was angry and brought *siāri* rope, bored holes in her two ears and tied her to two trees. He tied a great stone to her waist.

When the Raja went to find a wife for the boy, he found this girl. He freed her and took her home and married them. When they put them to sleep in the house the girl said, 'Don't let's stay here; let's go to the forest.' And they ran away. From these two were born the Gadabas and the Parengas; the Gadaba is the elder and the Parenga is the younger brother.

15

SAORA

Kasipalli, Sambalpur District

When the earth was covered with the waters no men or animals were left. Indra Raja's father, Bans Raja, looked down and saw the world being formed but still only half made, wet and unsteady and no creatures living. When he had seen everything, he went home and told his Rani Susamati. She said, 'If you want to make men, go and do so.' As he was going, she gave him a bone of her father's head which she had taken out when he died. 'When you make human beings, hit their heads twice with this bone and they'll come alive.'

Raja Bans went down to earth and there washed his body for seven days and seven nights and then at last clean dirt came from his skin and with this he made two models, one man and one woman. He hit them twice with the bone and life fell into them and they spoke to him. He took them to a golden cave. Twelve years passed. In those days it was always night. When Suran Deota [the Sun] was born there was light in the darkness. That day the woman conceived and in thirteen months a boy was born. When he grew up, Mahaprabhu came to see the boy and liked him. As he was born in the Golden Cave he was called Sonra. After him ten boys and ten girls were born and from them came many castes.

The Sonra's children became known as Saoras and they called their birthplace Saori-Narayan.[1]

16

SAORA

Ikshapalli, Sambalpur District

In Bankagarh, Sohara, a Bohori by caste, lived with his two wives. There were only a few men in the world then. The elder wife's name was Saoliran. Sohara loved her very much; he refused to let her do any work and kept the younger wife busy instead.

One year both wives were pregnant at the same time and when the nine months were over, the Bohori went to drink liquor in Uttrakand where there was a still. He returned in the evening and found the younger wife was tired. She had not cooked and was lying down. The elder wife was cooking instead. Sohara was angry with the younger wife and beat her and pushed her out of his house. 'Go and live in the village,' he shouted and the girl ran away. All night she went and as dawn came she reached Binjhigir. There she found a tiger's cave and hid in it. The tiger was frightened and ran away. After one-and-a-half months a son was born. The mother cut the cord and placenta and threw them on stones near by and the cave turned into a fine house.

When the boy grew up, his mother's father came searching for him and found him living in the big house. He was very pleased and went home to tell the neighbours. They went to see for themselves and called the boy Binjhwar. One day he asked who his father was, but his mother would not tell him. He became Raja of Binjhigir and from him the Binjhwar tribe began.[2]

[1] Local tradition traces the origin of the Saoras 'to the celebrated Seori of the *Ramayana*, who is supposed to have lived somewhere near the present Seori-Narayan in the Bilaspur District and to have given her name to this place. Ramachandra in his wanderings met her there, ate the plums which she had gathered for him after tasting each one herself, and out of regard for her devotion permitted her name to precede his own of Narayan in that given to the locality.'—Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. IV, p. 502.

[2] For other stories of the origin of the Binjhwars, see Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. II, p. 330.

17

HILL SAORA

Sundruba, Ganjam District

Ramma and Bimma were two brothers. One day, at a time when both their wives were pregnant they went together to get palm-wine. Ramma climbed up the tree and sat on the branches to drink the wine but Bimma could not climb and had to stand below catching in his mouth the drops that were spilt by Ramma. Suddenly a tiger appeared and attacked Bimma and devoured him.

Ramma went home alone. After a few days, Bimma's wife gave birth to one son and Ramma's wife to seven sons. The boys grew up and one day as they were playing together the seven sons of Ramma teased Bimma's son saying, 'You are a child without a father.' Bimma's son got very angry and cried, 'I will kill my mother for not telling me where my father is.'

So the next time the mother went for water, the boy took a stick and hid by the path. He caught hold of his mother and raised his stick to kill her but she said, 'Don't be angry. First let me take the water home and then I will let you know about your father.' They went home and the mother told the boy how, when Ramma and Bimma went to get palm-wine, a tiger killed his father as he stood beneath the tree. The boy said, 'Make me a gun.' His mother gave him a wooden gun. The boy said, 'Now I am going to kill the tiger.' The mother said, 'First of all kill a crow, then you can kill the tiger.' The boy went out and killed a crow. He came home and said, 'Now I am going to kill the tiger.' But his mother said, 'First of all kill a deer, then you can kill the tiger.' The boy went out and killed a deer. He came home and said, 'Now I am going to kill the tiger.' But his mother said, 'First of all kill a deer, then you can kill the tiger.' The boy went out and killed a deer. He came home and said, 'Now I am going to kill the tiger.' But his mother said, 'First of all kill a bison, then you can kill the tiger.'

The boy wearied of this and one day slipped out of the house secretly. He found the tiger and killed it. He carried the body to Ramma, who was very pleased and kept him in his house to serve for his daughter.

In due time Bimma's son became Raja of that country. He remembered the seven sons who had bullied him when he was a boy and he went to war against them. They hid in their houses and then fled to the hills. He pursued them but they killed his soldiers and captured him. He said to them, 'Let me go. I will rule the hills and you will rule over the plains.' This is how the Saoras have become rulers of the hills, for they are the children of Ramma.

18

HILL SAORA

Dantara, Ganjam District

Ketar-raji Ketar-Gumi Kittung's wife, Ajerang-diye, used to keep her gold and silver ornaments in an earthen pot and every kind of seed in a bamboo bin. One year, when the time came round for bringing out the seed for sowing,[1] the Kittung and his wife offered sacrifice before the bin as usual. Then Ajerang-diye put her hands into the bin in order to bring out the seed. But from inside the bin a girl handed her the seed saying, 'Mother, take the seed.' When she heard it, Ajerang-diye called her husband and they climbed up onto the bin and took the girl out.

They continued their sacrifice and when it was finished, Ajerang-diye went to get her ornaments to decorate herself for a dance. She put her hands into the pot in order to bring out the ornaments. But from inside the pot a girl handed her the ornaments, saying, 'Mother, take the ornaments. When she heard it, Ajerang-diye called her husband and they took the girl out. They bathed the two children and fed them and gave them names. They called the girl in the grain bin 'Sitaboi', and the girl in the pot 'Rupansuri Ranasuri'. When they grew up, Sitaboi was married to Ramma Kittung and the other girl to Bimma Kittung. This is why the Saoras, who have descended from Ramma, have plenty of grain and the Hindus, who have descended from Bimma, have all the gold and silver.

Now when the Brahmins saw the power of Ramma Kittung they

[1] The Saoras observe the occasion with sacrifices, feasting and the drawing of ritual pictographs. This story is recited by the shaman at the time.

caught him and shut him up in a brick temple. Sitaboi was left alone and she married Ranadiu Kittung. He took her for a time to Mandiabur Hill and then to Puri.

At every sacrifice we remember Sitaboi to ensure a good harvest, for she herself looks after every ear of grain and makes it fertile.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE

1

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

Mahadeo had a sister. She grew up into a beautiful woman but no one approached her, for they were afraid of her terrible brother.

One day Mahadeo said in his mind, 'This girl is getting very big; she ought to be married. I'll take her to Arjuna and tie her round his neck—then he'll have to marry her.' He went to Arjuna and said, 'O Arjuna, marry my sister.' Arjuna said, 'No, I can't marry your sister.'

Mahadeo went to a Kamar's house and brought a bamboo fan and a marriage-basket, the basket in which the bride is swung. He tied his sister round Arjuna's neck and made them sit in the basket. In this way they were forced to marry.

But Arjuna jumped up and said, 'I don't want to marry this girl.' There was a hollow banyan tree near by and he hid in it. Mahadeo said to the bridesmaids, 'Put turmeric and oil on this tree and pour plenty of water into the hollow and fan it with the fan.' Mahadeo got so cold with the water and the breeze that he had to come out. He said, 'Very well, I'll marry her, but don't torment me any more.'

They completed the marriage by going seven times round the banyan tree.

This was the first marriage, and from it all the world learnt how to perform the ceremony.

2

KOND

Kudelpada, Kalahandi District

When men were born they brought with them some *siāri* seeds and went to live in the jungle. They lived like monkeys,

jumping from bough to bough and eating their *siāri* seeds. They did not recognize mother or sister: each took his pleasure as he felt inclined. One day Nirantali called the Chief and said, 'How is it you're living in this way, recognizing neither mother nor sister?' The Chief said, 'We live like jungle monkeys. We've no food to give for feasts at weddings and how can we have relatives without weddings?' 'Come,' said Nirantali and took him into the house and gave him rice-beer, a pig and a cock and some rice. 'Eat this sort of thing. First go to the jungle; sacrifice and cut your clearings. When you've got the clearing ready, I'll get every kind of seed from the horse and the elephant and send it to you. Sacrifice when you cut and fire and sow and when you marry, then you'll be able to recognize who is your mother and sister.'

The Chief took these things, he sacrificed them and gave a little to everyone. When they ate, wisdom came to them and they realized this woman was mother, this sister, this wife. After this men began to eat rice and recognize their relations.

3

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

In the old days the Saoras did not marry, but if two people loved each other they lived together at their own will. This annoyed the older people, for parents and Chiefs got nothing out of it. There was no bride-price and no gift of liquor at the betrothal or when the youth came to fetch his girl. Kittung decided at last to institute marriage in order to please parents and relatives. He gave an order that boys and girls should not come together just as they pleased, but that for two or three years a boy should go from time to time to his future father-in-law's house with gifts of liquor, and that only when the girl's father gave the word could the two live together as man and wife. 'Furthermore,' said Kittung, 'there must be a dance and a feast and plenty of liquor so that everyone, and not only the boy and girl, can get some pleasure out of the event. Anyone who does not obey this order will die.'

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

THE BEGINNINGS OF RELIGION

I

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

First men were made, then the gods. But in those days men were so busy cultivating, coupling, eating, drinking, dancing that they had no time for the gods and gave them no sacrifices. The gods lived in the forest on fruit and flowers, wind and water. So, untroubled by religion, men grew rich.

But when Mahaprabhu saw the prosperity of men he was worried. 'If men are as rich as this they'll not be afraid of anyone. I must think of some way of getting their money out of them.' Mahaprabhu called the gods and made them stay with him for six months; during that time he made them very comfortable with rich meals of milk and sugar. Then he said, 'Go and live among men. There is one Seti Sisa; go to him; he is a friend of mine. He'll make arrangements for your camp and will get you all the supplies you need.'

The gods went to the Sisa—it was like the coming of the police in a case of murder—and he made arrangements for them and showed them where to stay. He gave them names—he called one Dumbar and sent him to live in the sacred grove near the village. He sent Orseley, the tiger god, to haunt the approaches to the swiddens. Another god he named Runkta and put him to live in the stream where people went to bathe. He sent Saoruli to live in the hill above the village, Bugabor to the forest, Dagoi and Gurangpoi to his own house, Singraj to the spring. For Sindibor he made a stone platform.

To feed all these gods the Sisa had to levy supplies from the villagers. And the gods were not now content with roots and fruit; they had grown soft in Mahaprabhu's palace and they demanded meat and grain. Men soon became poor again.

2

GADABA

Thal Duralu, Koraput District

There was a very rich Gadaba called Angra; he had twelve sons. He married them to good girls and died. The sons performed his funeral ceremonies and continued in their ordinary way of life. But there was no water in the village and the women had to go a long way to draw it from a little stream. The villagers gathered on the *sodor*-platform and decided to dig a well. They dug it in the very place where Angra had been cremated. They went down eighty cubits deep but found no water, then at last they came to black rocks.

Below the rocks lived Basmat Kaniya. She was pregnant. It took the twelve brothers seven nights and seven days to break open the rocks, but at last they split apart and the iron stick of one of the brothers slipped through and pierced Basmat Kaniya's belly. Out of the broken belly poured a multitude of gods and the well was at once full of water. The gods seized three of the brothers and began to eat their flesh. The others climbed out of the well, but the gods pursued them. Whenever they saw a man, the gods jumped on him as a tiger jumps and devoured the living flesh.

When Sukru Guru who lived on Machhar Hill heard what was happening, he brought twelve cartloads of fowls, pigs and coconuts and began to search for the gods. For a time he could not find them, but at last he came up with them at Sankargarh. He fell at their feet crying, 'I have brought you your dinner; now stop eating the flesh of men.' So the gods left eating men and turned to fowls and pigs. The Guru promised that ever afterwards men would provide them with this food.

3

KONDA DORA

Turiya, Koraput District

In Malidongar there were twelve Gadaba houses. One day there was a wedding and everybody went to it. The host gave

one of the neighbours a frog in his food and when he ate it, many frogs were born in his belly and it swelled up and he died. His relatives carried him to Barsidongar and buried him. They drove a slab of stone into the grave and it broke open his belly. From it there came out every kind of demon. They attacked the mourners, giving them fever, cough, motions, and ague. Trembling with fear they went home. They called a shaman and he sacrificed goats and fowls and the demons let the people be.

Next day the ghost of the dead man caught hold of his widow and made a great wound in her head. She called Domburu, the shaman, and got him to sacrifice. The ghost said, 'I won't accept anything but my wife's bustle.[1] Set it up for me as my throne and offer food before it.' The shaman set the bustle as a throne and offered a fowl before it and the ghost went away. After its departure, the wound healed. After that the Gadabas learnt to sacrifice for the dead before a woman's bustle before doing anything else.

4

KOND

Amblibuwa, Koraput District

Long long ago there were two brothers—their names were Poratoskaro and Poradodenga—and they made the earth. They had in their hands water, seed and animals. They used to worship Dala Pinnu. One day these two brothers, carrying their bows and arrows, came in a dream to a Kond called Tolamba. 'We have come,' they said, 'to visit you. We are not going to stay in the village, for the only food we can eat is the blood of a goat and the egg of a fowl. These are our bows and arrows. We give them to you. We ourselves will go to live in a mango tree outside the village.'

Tolamba awoke and when he looked at his right hand he found it was holding a bow and arrow. He told the people the next morning that they must worship the two brothers, but they laughed at him and did nothing about it. Then for three years

[1] The small block of wood or cords tied as a bustle at the back of a Gadaba woman.

there was no rain and the crops failed and many died of hunger. At last Tolamba took his winnowing-fan and rice and Darni Pinnu came upon him and said, 'You took no notice of what the brothers said to you. This is your world and if you do not live here, where will you live?' Tolamba promised that if the next harvest was a good one, the people would sacrifice anything that the brothers wanted.

That year the crops improved and at the time of harvest the people sacrificed a goat and offered eggs to the two brothers. When it was over, the people danced and the two brothers came in human form and danced with them. They took their bows and arrows in their hands and showed the people how to shoot at each other as they danced. In the old days they used to use arrows with iron heads, but after the Meriah sacrifice was stopped, they also stopped using the iron heads.

On the first day of the dance the villagers were very drunk and did not recognize the two brothers, but afterwards when they found that the two brothers had disappeared, they realized that they were gods. Nowadays we sacrifice every third year under the mango tree where the brothers lived and a week later we take out our seed for sowing.[1]

5

KOND

Kudelpada, Kalahandi District

In the old days, there were no rules: people did not have to fast; they took food and tobacco from the hands of menstruating women and ate before sacrificing. Darni Pinnu got very angry at this and called Dina Pandenj who was at that time her shaman. She said to him in a dream: 'You eat food and tobacco from defiled women and when visitors come you eat with them before sacrifice. That is why your harvests fail.' The shaman told everyone about his dream and for this reason now the Chief and

[1] This is so, and in 1945, at Amblibuwa, I witnessed the ceremony (at which this story is recited) and the dance in which the dancers shoot at each other with their bows and arrows.

shaman of a village do not eat from anyone else during a sacrifice and do not eat at all before it.[1]

6

KOND

Kapilpada, Kalahandi District

Long ago Nirantali prepared to sacrifice to Tara Pinnu. Tara Pinnu said, 'Make some sort of red decoration for me and I'll be pleased.' Nirantali went to find red earth. She said to Paramugatti, 'I want red earth.' He cut the first finger of his right hand and said, 'Take this blood somewhere and throw it on the ground.' She did so and from it grew red earth and with this they built walls and made drawings and sacrificed. After that Tara Pinnu went into water and lived there. At the time of sacrifice she was there. When it was over, she got up to eat the sacrificial food and the hills and the earth shook. When there is an earthquake it means that Tara Pinnu has got up to get her food.

7

KUTTIA KOND

Sikerguda, Kalahandi District

Soru Pinnu [a Hill-god] and Bango Pinnu [an Earth-god] were friends. When the Konds gave a goat to Soru Pinnu they always sent a share to Bango Pinnu and when they gave a buffalo to Bango Pinnu they sent a share to Soru Pinnu. When Soru Pinnu went anywhere Bango Pinnu looked after his children.

One day, the shaman went in a dream to Soru Pinnu and Bango Pinnu to ask why they had to divide the meat in this way. Bango Pinnu said, 'If you sacrifice a boy to me, I'll tell you.'

The shaman sacrified a boy and Bango Pinnu came to him in a dream and said, 'Look! We two are friends; I am an Earth-

[1] Among all the tribes there are strict taboos about eating before sacrifice. This usually applies only to the celebrants, but in the case of the First Fruits ceremonies, to the whole village. Menstruation taboos vary greatly: the objection to taking food and tobacco from a woman in her period would hold good for the Konds, but not necessarily for other tribes.

god and he is a Hill-god. It is too much for you to look after us both. Let the shaman look to the gods and make a Chief to look to the Government.' The shaman therefore appointed a Chief and henceforth they shared the work of the village.

8

KUTTIA KOND

Bilaisarda, Ganjam District

There were two Konds, Londruka and Timaka. Londruka married a girl called Pussari and Timaka a girl named Bhandijilla. They lived all together in one house. The years passed by and in due time children were born, many of them. But then the gods began to trouble them and many of the children fell ill. They were frightened and went to Nirantali to ask her what to do. She told Londruka that he should be the priest of the village and Timaka should be the shaman. She told Londruka to sacrifice a buffalo to Darni Pinnu every three years. She told Timaka that he should look after the sick and that Baburai and Maoli would come upon him and teach him what to do. In this way the Chiefs and priests of the Konds were established and the descendants of Londruka and Timaka carried on the work.

9

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

Dubla Saora lived in the Under World. He had four sons and soon after he had arranged their marriages he fell ill and died. The boys covered his body with lotus leaves and carried him to the cremation ground, where they burnt him on a pyre of green *karanji* wood. From his ashes all the gods were born. They attacked the boys in dreams and made one cough, and gave another itch, and gave watery motions to a third, and smallpox to a fourth. But the eldest son was a shaman and when he discovered what was the matter he made the proper sacrifices and sent the gods to the Middle World. Since then the gods have

lived with the Saoras in the Middle World and have tormented them instead.

10

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

Sargada Kittung was a Brahmin. In the old days there were exactly one hundred Brahmins in the world. One of them was very poor, but all the others were rich. They did not use oil in their lamps but filled them with their own urine.

One day the wife of the poor Brahmin said to her husband, 'All these other Brahmins burn their own urine in their lamps but you have neither lamp, nor urine.' The poor Brahmin said, 'But I am so powerful that if I take sixty steps outside this village the whole world will be turned into water.' His wife took no notice of him and the poor Brahmin walked sixty steps outside the village. Immediately the whole world turned into water and the ninety-nine Brahmins and his own wife were drowned. He himself turned into a Kittung and now lives like a burning flame on the branches of a tree.

11

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

The wind was born from Jagantha Kittung. He was the youngest of seven brothers. The six elder brothers were all married but the youngest was not. The other brothers used to go daily to work in their fields but Jagantha stayed at home.

Jagantha was beautiful and he was young. The wives of the six elder brothers grew very fond of him and one day they tried to seduce him. He took no notice of them, but they continued day after day to try to win him. At last he threatened to tell their husbands what they were doing. They got frightened at that and scratched themselves with thorns and tore their clothes. Then they ran to the fields and told their husbands that Jagantha had attempted to dishonour them.

Full of rage the brothers came home and tied the boy up. They put him beneath a banyan tree and set fire to it. But wind came from his body and blew the fire away and he was unharmed.[1]

After this Jagantha became a Kittung.

12

HILL SAORA

Kittim, Koraput District

In the old days, when people died the neighbours used just to throw the corpses away. As a result children were not born and the dead did not become ancestral spirits. So the population decreased. Kittung thought, 'It is because vultures devour the bodies that no souls come to me. It will be better if we have bodies burnt in future.' Presently a man called Langsu died in Resing village. When Kittung heard the news he hastened there and told every household to bring wood and pile it up outside the village. They did so and burnt the body.

On the Guar day Kittung said to the people, 'Whenever anyone dies now, do not throw the corpse away, but burn it. If you can't burn it, bury it.'

The ghosts of those who are buried are white, those of the burnt are black.

13

HILL SAORA

Ragaisingi, Ganjam District

There were no shamans and shamanins at first, for men never fell ill. After a long time, on Uyungada Hill a shamanin, Sahibari, came out of the ground and with her every kind of disease. The diseases spread down the valleys and across the hills and men got fever, belly-ache, smallpox and every other sickness. One man in agony with pain in his belly and fever

[1] There is a similar incident in the Gond-Muria legend of Lingo. Lingo too is falsely accused by his brothers' wives; he is put in the fire, and miraculously saved. See my *The Muria and their Ghotul*, pp. 229 ff.

thought, 'If I stay in the village, I'll get worse: I'll go to the jungle to recover or die.' He escaped into the forest and in time found himself in the very cave where the first shamanin was living. She asked what was the matter with him and when he told her, she put her hand on his head and he recovered. He then lived with her for a while and learnt the work of a shaman. They became man and wife and both went through the villages curing people.

14

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

Long ago Kittung was the special friend of the cow. They ate together and went about together. But one day when Kittung put his bedding out in the sun to air, the cow ate it. Kittung was very angry and brought the friendship to an end. 'As you've eaten my bedding, so all men will eat you,' he said. 'But since we have been friends for so long, those who perform my worship —the shamans—will not eat you.'

So now the shamans do not eat beef; if they do, they vomit and fall ill.

15

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

At first, when the Saoras died their relatives did not erect stones for them and the ghosts gave the living a lot of trouble, for they had nowhere to live and had to wander about restlessly. They killed so many in their anger that the population began to decrease.

There were three Kittungs living on Badung Hill. The Saoras went to them and told them their trouble. The chief of the Kittungs said, 'Whenever anyone dies, you must perform the Guar ceremony.' 'But we have never heard of it,' said the Saora. 'The Guar,' said the Kittung, 'is a means of giving the ghosts somewhere to live. On the special day send one woman for rice and

one for water and liquor. Go to the forest and find a stone; offer it rice and liquor and dig it up. Wrap it in a new cloth, in a woman's cloth for a female ghost, in a man's cloth for a male ghost. Bring it to a place near the village. Next day call the shaman, dig a hole in the ground, put rice and liquor into it and plant the stone. Dance round it, blow trumpets and fire guns. Kill a buffalo and feast on its flesh. The ghost will live in the stone and there will be no more trouble. But if you forget to do this, the house-people will fall ill and die.'

The Meriah Sacrifice

16

KOND

Bodgaon, Ganjam District

When Mukman Sahib ordered the Konds to stop offering human sacrifice, his brother, Kiramal Sahib, heard about it and was very angry. He said to Mukman Sahib, 'Why have you stopped this practice?' and there was a violent quarrel between them.[1]

Now Mukman Sahib had an elephant and Kiramal Sahib had a horse. The elephant had wings and used to fly about. One day Mukman Sahib called the Konds and took them hunting to Marigarh Hill, but Kiramal Sahib hid behind some bushes on the way hoping to surprise his brother and kill him. But Mukman Sahib saw him in time, and the two brothers met and continued to quarrel. Kiramal Sahib drew his sword and cut off the wings of his brother's elephant and the great creature fell to the ground. Then he caught hold of his brother, but during the struggle Mukman Sahib managed to get free and jumped on to the horse and escaped. Then Kiramal Sahib cut off the elephant's tail and wings and threw them away.

Since that day elephants have had small tails and have not been able to fly.

[1] There was certainly disagreement between Campbell and Macpherson, who are apparently the officers intended, but it was not on this subject.

17

KOND

Kesaraguda, Ganjam District

Darni Pinnu demanded food in sacrifice, and they offered her everything they could find, but she refused it all. She said, 'The only thing I want is a human being.' When the Konds heard this they felt very bad about it and said, 'We will die but we will not give you human beings.' And they took no more notice of Darni Pinnu.

But she, being angry, caused famine to come upon them and whatever grain they sowed remained unfertile in the fields. No rain fell and even the fruits and roots of the jungle dried up. The people finished all their old grain and then had to eat leaves and grass. When Darni Pinnu saw them doing this, she dried up the leaves and grass as well. Then the people had to live on water, but Darni Pinnu dried up the lakes and rivers.

Then at last, in despair, the people went to Darni Pinnu and promised to give her whatever she wanted, even if it was their own children. 'We will give you human beings,' they said, 'but how are we to catch them? If you will send them to us, we will sacrifice them.' Darni Pinnu was pleased and sent rain and the leaves became green again and the crops grew. Then she went to the Patawali country and stole a Lohar boy. She appointed a man called Singaboi as a shaman and gave the boy to him. For three days the shaman bathed the boy. On a Sunday he anointed him with turmeric and oil and fed him on rice. Then he tied him to a pillar and killed him in the name of Darni Pinnu. The goddess was pleased and gave the people good crops and the harvests continued to be good, until Mokmal Sahib and Kiramal Sahib stopped the sacrifices.

In other parts of the Kond country Mukri Sahib, Kiramal Sahib and Tool Sahib stopped the sacrifices, because they said that the number of people in the world was being too quickly diminished by them.

18

KUTTIA KOND

Kudimila, Ganjam District

The entire Timak clan of the Konds used to assemble at Saphaganna to offer human sacrifice. They used not to do this in their own villages but only in Saphaganna; in their own villages they used to sacrifice a Meriah buffalo.

Darni Pinnu herself used to bring boys for sacrifice from Kalahandi at the time of wind and rain. The boy would come with the wind and stand trembling in the courtyard of the priest's house with folded hands. The priest would take him by the hand into the house, where he would himself cook on a separate hearth and feed the boy. Then he would send the news to all the members of the clan and they would gather at Saphaganna.

There they tied the boy by the neck to Darni Pinnu's pillar and bathed him with turmeric water. Once the priest tried to kill a boy by striking his neck but he missed the place and cut the small of the back instead. When the boy was dead they buried everything on the spot, the bones, flesh and blood. They did not take anything to their fields, for it was taboo to remove anything from Saphaganna.

Nowadays when the goddess comes upon a shaman she says, 'Will you give me garlic and onions?' The meaning of this is that men smell like garlic and onions in the nostrils of the gods, though women do not smell. When the goddess asks this, the Konds reply, 'Government no longer allows us to give you garlic and onions.'

The goddess replies, 'This is why you are always ill and tigers and elephants ruin your crops and the Forest Guards take away your forest.' The Konds reply, 'It was Kiamol and Mokmal who told us to give you buffaloes. It was not our fault; let the sin rest upon them.' When the goddess hears this she accepts their offerings.

19

KUTTIA KOND

Palari, Ganjam District

At the beginning the Konds used to offer coconuts to their gods in Saphaganna. But Darni Pinnu was not satisfied with this and one day she said, 'Give me a human being in sacrifice. Bring me a member of the Gour caste.' After that the Konds began to offer human sacrifice.

This went on for a long time. Then in Saphaganna there was a great quarrel and many men were killed and many were wounded in the fight.

At this time Mukman Sahib was born at Belagada-Lajugada. When he was about twenty years old he married the daughter of Bineng Raja of Nijugada. Six months after the marriage he came with his wife to Saphaganna.

It so happened that on that very day the Konds were preparing to sacrifice a human being. Mukman Sahib and his wife were both dressed in Kond fashion and they said, 'Wait a little, because we would like to be present.' So the Konds delayed and then Mukman Sahib and his wife said, 'If you ever again do human sacrifice we will kill every one of you. Let this man go; you are not to kill him.' From their talk the people realized that they were not Konds but came from Government, and they said, 'If we do not give Darni Pinnu a human being, what can we give her?' Mukman Sahib gave them twenty rupees and said, 'Go to Bhawanipatna and buy a buffalo and sacrifice that instead.' The Konds did so and on a Sunday sacrificed the buffalo.

Mukman Sahib and his wife remained two days until the sacrifice was finished and then they went home. Twenty years later Mukman Sahib died. He had five sons and three daughters. After his death his sons and daughters visited Saphaganna and they too told the Konds not to offer human sacrifice. Since that day no sahib has ever visited the place.

20

KUTTIA KOND

Sirki, Ganjam District

Paramugatti was born in the Under World. After some time he desired to come up to the earth. Then the Pathans were born. The first Pathans were Alenja-Pirtenja and Deolenj-Gubbalenj. These were the first two human beings. They said to one another, 'Paramugatti is preparing to come up to the earth. When he comes, he will take it all into his power.' So they went up first and emerged into the world at Saphaganna. They wandered from place to place establishing villages and erecting pillars in honour of Darni Pinnu. In front of each pillar they used to prepare a patch of ground with their own urine and excrement, thinking that this would please the goddess. But it made her very angry and she drove those Musalmans away. Then she herself left the world and went down to the Under World. There she took the name of Nirantali.

When Nirantali saw Paramugatti was ready to go up to the world, she took him by the hand and went up with him. At that time there was nothing but rocks in the Kond country. Nirantali covered them with soil.

Then Paramugatti put an axe over his shoulder and took a hoe in his hand and went out to look for a woman. But as he could not find any woman, he caught a snake, a frog and a she-goat and took them instead. When Nirantali saw this, she went back to the Under World to fetch a woman. She brought the daughter of her sister Pusuruli, a beautiful girl called Singasuri-Merasuri. Paramugatti was very pleased with her; they lived together and from them the first Konds were born.

Now when these children were born, Nirantali turned herself back into Darni Pinnu and one night she came to Paramugatti in a dream and told him that he must offer her sacrifice. Paramugatti said, 'Where should I sacrifice?' He found one of the stones that had been erected by the Musalmans and he cleaned the place with mud and sacrificed a root. But Darni Pinnu was not pleased. Next day Paramugatti sacrificed a plantain tree. But Darni Pinnu was still not pleased. Then the next day he

sacrificed a *bija* tree, the resin of which looks like blood, for Darni Pinnu had said in the dream that she must have blood. But still she was not pleased. Then he caught a squirrel and sacrificed that. But Darni Pinnu was still not pleased. At last he brought a cow. But as he was about to kill it, it opened its mouth and showed its upper and lower teeth. Darni Pinnu was frightened that the cow would eat her and started to run away. So Paramugatti let the cow go.

Then at last came a young girl; her name was Rangodupo. She said, 'Sacrifice me,' and Paramugatti killed her and gave her flesh and blood to Darni Pinnu. Now at last the goddess was pleased.

In this way human sacrifice began. It was no matter whether the victim was a boy or a girl but it was usually a boy, and he had to be unmarried and purchased for twelve rupees from his own parents.

In those days, when the time for sacrifice came, they began to beat their drums seven days beforehand. When the sound of the drums reached the victim's ear, the goddess used to come upon him. On the day of sacrifice they dressed him with rich ornaments and flowers and went dancing with him to the pillar of Darni Pinnu. Here they gave him some cooked rice. Then he bowed his head and said, 'Now kill me.' The priest cut off his head and the whole company rushed at the body with their knives and cut off little bits of flesh, which they carried to their clearings and buried in the soil to make it fertile.

21

KUTTIA KOND

Surangbaro, Ganjam District

Long ago Lingar, the Chief, Surerant, the priest, and Jannara, the shaman, used to offer the Meriah sacrifice at Saphaganna. Darni Pinnu said to them, 'Give me human beings.' The three Konds said, 'Where are we to get human beings for sacrifice for who will come willingly to offer himself?' Darni Pinnu said, 'Well, I myself will bring someone and you will be able to give me my food.'

Darni Pinnu went to Kalahandi and found an unmarried Gour boy. She looked at him and said, 'He will do very well for my dinner.' The boy went out to graze the cattle and goats and Darni Pinnu said to herself, 'How shall I catch him? He may cry out and the neighbours will rescue him.' So she sent for a whirlwind and it carried the boy up into the air and away to Saphaganna.

The three men caught him and tied him up with iron chains. After three days they bathed him with warm water. Then they erected a pillar of freshly-cut *sarai* wood in the name of Darni Pinnu and tied the boy to it. They cooked rice and turmeric and after killing a fowl on his head, they fed the boy on the food. When he had eaten it they said, 'What sort of harvest will we get this year? Will tigers attack us or not?' The boy said, 'You will have a good harvest and have no trouble from any tiger.' When he said that, they killed him with an axe. They cut off his head and buried it at the foot of the pillar. Everybody present cut off a strip of the flesh and ran with it to his field and buried it there.

This went on until Mukman Sahib came and stopped it.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT

1

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

The goddess Birkamdai was very rich. She lent money to the gods and ghosts. Many of them used to come to work in her house, and she gave them good wages. She ate nothing but the livers and blood of human beings.

When she grew very old and it was time for her to die, she called the gods and ghosts and said, 'When I die, don't throw my body away and don't burn it. But cut it into little pieces, put them in a pot, cover it with a lid and cook it. When it is ready, don't eat the flesh yourselves, but put the pot in the river and let it float away.'

Soon after this Birkamdai died. They cut her body into little pieces, put them into a pot, covered it with a lid and cooked it. When the flesh was ready, they took the pot to the river and let it float away.

Some distance down the stream lived a Gadaba woman who lived on fish. Every day she used to go fishing. That day she saw a pot floating down towards her and she waded out and brought it to the bank. There she saw it was full of meat. She ate some of it on the spot and took the rest home. She had seven granddaughters. They feasted on the meat, and the result was that they became the first witches.[1]

2

GADABA

Thal Duralu, Koraput District

There was a youth called Churaimar, for he spent all his time snaring and shooting birds. He married a pretty girl, but when

[1] This is an echo of a famous and widely-distributed story, which is told by the Baigas, Pardhans and Santals.—MMI, pp. 443 ff.

he went to her, she abused him saying, 'All you can do is to kill birds,' and she kicked him and would not let him approach her. The boy went out and slept miserably on the veranda. The next night, the girl behaved in the same way, and this went on for a long time.

One night, when Churaimar, unable to be with his wife, was wandering in the woods looking for birds, he thought about his unhappy fate and began to weep loudly. A famous shaman Kungaru, who was the magician of the gods, heard him crying and came to see what was the matter. When he heard the boy's story, he said, 'I will give you a remedy for this.' He took a hair from his head, rubbed some dirt from his body, wrapped it in two pipal leaves and burnt them. He gave the ashes to the boy. 'Slip this into her food when she's not looking,' he said, 'and all will be well.'

Churaimar went home and put the ashes into his wife's food. Directly she had eaten it, she became filled with love for him; she wept for him; she could not leave him for a moment. When the boy saw how successful the remedy was, he went back to the shaman and became his disciple.

3

GADABA

Boronga, Koraput District

Long ago an old Gadaba woman lived with her granddaughter on Borondi Hill.

One day Agasburiya Deota came to visit the old woman, bringing her a present of rice-beer. She drank it, and when she had finished she said, 'Why have you brought me this?' Agasburiya Deota said, 'I want to marry your granddaughter.' The old woman was angry; she beat the god with her broom and broke his beer-pot. 'If I give you my granddaughter, who will I have to live with me?' she screamed.

Agasburya Deota ran away, but as he went the girl fainted. Then the old woman realized that she had beaten a god. She was afraid the girl would die and went after him to call him back. But she could not find him anywhere. So she went to Kanda Dokari and told her what had happened. Kanda Dokari said,

'It is a serious matter when a god wishes to marry a human girl. You will have to agree. If you can't find him, then perform a path-marriage. Build the wedding-booth on a path leading out of the village, and celebrate the marriage without the bridegroom. But you must, of course, do it in his name.'

The old woman went home and celebrated a path-marriage for her daughter in the name of Agasburiya Deota. This made the girl a shaman, and she at once began to divine and treat the sick with the help of the broom, the fan and the lamp.[1]

4

GADABA

Thal Duralu, Koraput District

At first there was no death and no witchcraft in the world. Mahaprabhu thought, 'If these people do not die, there will soon be no room for them in the world.' He called a great many people to dance and took them to a Kond village. He told the Konds, 'We are dancers and have come to visit you.' Then he went away from the village into the jungle and began the dance. The Konds gathered to watch. On that day a Kond woman had given birth to a child; there was no one there, only the woman and her husband. The husband was so excited about the dance that he left his wife; he locked her in the house, putting a lock on the door from outside and went away into the forest to the place where they were dancing.

The dance went on for two or four days and the Kond stayed there watching. In the meantime the woman was dying of hunger and thirst. She tried to get out of the house, but there was no one there and the door was locked on the outside. She was so hungry that at last she ate the placenta of her own child, that had come from her own body. When her husband came home, he saw his wife's mouth stained with blood, and her eyes red. He asked

[1] This is one of the stories told at the dedication of a Guruma. A girl who is to practise as a shamanin must undergo a marriage ceremony, on a path leading out of her village, with a god of the Under World. She then is qualified to divine the cause of sickness by the methods known throughout tribal India, by measuring grass from a broom, by rubbing rice in a winnowing-fan, and by oscillating a lamp.

her what she had done and she told him that she had eaten the placenta.

Because of this death came to the world. After a time some women ate food from this woman's plate and they turned into witches. That is why we never eat anyone's leavings now. The Konds are the greatest of magicians and their women are the worst of witches.

5

JUANG

Kajuria, Keonjhar District

In the early days Rusain used to wear leaves. She had hair growing from her tongue. The result was that she always had her tongue out and the hair hanging down in front of her face. This was so tiresome that she could do nothing but go about the world cursing people. It was impossible for her to speak sweetly. She would say, 'May a tiger kill you. May a snake bite you. May a flood carry you away.' As a result many people died.

Mahaprabhu thought in his mind, 'This Rusain will soon kill everyone.' He went to her and tried to pull the hair out of her tongue. When it did not come out, he went to the jungle to find some remedy. He found a centipede, the kind which rolls up into a ball. He thought, 'If I can only get her to eat this, the hair will come out.' Mahaprabhu brought the centipede, fried it with a little fish and gave it to Rusain to eat. At once her hair fell out and her tongue went into her mouth. Now she was comfortable but her power was lost. She still abused everyone she met, but nothing happened. After a time, however, the hair grew again and she was as bad as before.

Mahaprabhu again got the hair off, but this time she saved one or two threads and gave it to her daughter, and soon the girl also had hair growing from her tongue. Then Mahaprabhu said, 'Now there are two of them, but I cannot go on doing nothing but pull out their hair.' So he created shamans to fight against the witches. The first shamans were Sindho Guru and Panto Guru.

6

KONDA DORA

Phatu, Koraput District

The people of Ranchaput employed a Gadaba to graze their cattle. One day this Gadaba took them to the hill called Singaldar, where the god Vidyajhola lived. When the god saw the Gadaba he shouted to him to bring him some milk. The Gadaba said, 'Well, if I give you milk what will you give me?' The god said, 'Come here daily and I will teach you every kind of magic.' The Gadaba gave him the milk of five cows and returned home.

Next morning the Gadaba returned to the hill, and for a month and a half he went every day to learn magic from the god. When he had become adept he first enchanted a neighbour and killed him. Then he made a love-charm for the dead man's widow and it made her forget her sorrow, and on the tenth day she came to him. The Gadaba went to Vidyajhola who blessed him saying, 'As I have taught you, so do you teach mankind.' This Gadaba was the first of the shamans.

7

KUTTIA KOND

Mundimaska, Ganjam District

In a village lived seven brothers. They had no parents, but a maternal grandmother looked after them.

On a hill was only one stream of water, only one. The eldest brother made a platform near the stream to kill a sambhar, for many animals came to drink there. He tried for four days, but always missed. Then the five next brothers also tried and failed. Finally, the youngest brother killed a jungle bison and called his brothers. 'Look, how big you are and could kill nothing, yet a little chap like me can kill a bison.' When they cut open the belly they found a human baby inside. He said, 'You've killed my mother: now where will I get milk?' They said, 'We'll feed you and arrange your marriage; you shall be our youngest brother.' But suddenly the dead bison came to life and stood up; it killed the youngest brother and carried him off on its horns.

A black bird said to the baby, 'The bison has killed the boy, come let's go and kill it.' The bird led the baby to a tree and he killed the bison.

In a tank were seven girls and the baby said to the brothers, 'Let's marry them.' But seeing them the girls hid: the boys sought the seven girls. Then the baby took dirt from his body and made love-medicine and put it on the girl's bodies and they loved the boys. They played hide-and-seek and at last married each other.

8

PARENGA

Rupodai, Koraput District

Jamma Mahaprabhu had a daughter whose name was Biramdai. When she grew up, she was married in the Middle World to Birkam Mahaprabhu. In due time she conceived, and when the day for her delivery drew near, her husband went to call Jamma Mahaprabhu.

While he was away Biramdai gave birth to a boy. She herself cut the cord and threw the placenta away. A kite flew down and carried it off.

In a neighbour's house, the priest's daughter was husking grain in the courtyard. The kite dropped the placenta near her and the girl left her work and picked it up. She thought it was a bit of the flesh of some animal, so she roasted it and sat down to eat it. A Dom woman came by selling tobacco; she saw the girl eating something and asked for a bit of it. In this way they both ate the placenta.

When Jamma Mahaprabhu saw Birkam Mahaprabhu he rebuked him for leaving his wife alone. 'We must go quickly to her,' he said, 'for if by any chance she has thrown the placenta away, it may bring disaster to the world.' They went quickly home and when they saw the newly-born child they asked where the placenta was. Biramdai said that she had thrown it away and that a kite had taken it. They went round the village asking everyone if they had seen the kite, and the priest's daughter said that she had picked it up by mistake and eaten it.

Jamma Mahaprabhu cried, '*Chi*! *Chi*! You've eaten human flesh. You will become a witch.'

Ever since then, after a child is born, we have buried the placenta and cord in a secret place where no witch will be able to get it.

9

SAORA

Pastamura, Sambalpur District

Raja Goibandho lived in Tipali City. He had three wives and seven sons. One day his eldest wife was carried off by Raja Balod Singh of Amarpur. Raja Goibandho took his army and went in pursuit. He searched for her in every kingdom but could get no news of her. At last he arrived outside Amarpur and camped by the lake. As the soldiers were busy cooking their dinner, the wife of the palace barber came to bathe. The Raja sent for her and spoke kindly to her, promising her many presents, and she told him where the Rani was.

When the Raja heard that his wife was in Amarpur, he told his soldiers to finish their meal quickly and prepare for battle. He entered the city with the roar of battle-drums, and soon had killed half the people. By then it was time for supper, so they stopped for that day, but next morning they returned and killed the rest of the people of Amarpur, and rescued the captured Rani.

On the way home the Raja felt very thirsty. He came to a magic stream and drank a little of the water. With the water every kind of magic power and knowledge entered his body, and the spring dried up. When he returned home he taught his magic to his seven sons and they became the first seven shamans. After his death his sons made many disciples and in this way the knowledge of magic spread through the world.

10

HILL SAORA

Maneba, Ganjam District

On Rameli Hill lived a great magician called Kursu Saora.

His wife was dead. On the same hill lived Bhainsu Saora with his beautiful unmarried daughter, Machho. After his wife's death, Kursu grew to love this girl very much and often begged her to come to him. But her mind was not for the old man. After a long time, Kursu said to himself, 'Here am I, a great shaman, and I cannot do anything about this girl.' He thought and thought and then on a Wednesday he took a lime, a black chicken, a coconut and a bottle of liquor and at midnight went naked to Muski Hill, where there was a shrine to Umahansingisum.[1] Kursu offered the chicken and coconut to the god and sprinkled him with liquor, and thus persuaded Umahansingisum, to take up his abode in the lime. He said, 'O Umahansingisum, when Machho eats this lime, bring her to my house.' He took the fruit to a lime tree growing near the village and climbed into the branches. When Machho came by with her pot, on her way to the stream for water, Kursu dropped the lime at her feet. She picked it up and ate it. At once love came to her, and that day she was restless and at midnight went to the house of the old man. Kursu was very pleased and taught his magic to many people.

[1] The root *umá* means 'to bathe', and is often used also in the sense 'to be pregnant'. The name Umahansingisum therefore probably has some reference to the pregnancy that may well result from the use of a love-charm.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

GOVERNMENT AND THE MONETARY SYSTEM

I

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

Uttelsai Maharaja lived before there was a 'Sirkar'. No one minded anyone: a man robbed, killed, cheated as he wished.

A certain Bhattra and his wife had a son called Manuja. One day a Kewat brought fish to his house. The Bhattra's wife saw him and said, 'Give me some fish.' The Kewat said, 'Do love with me and I'll give you some.' For the sake of the fish she did love with him. The Kewat gave her some fish and went his way. But the Bhattra's son saw what had been done.

The woman cooked the fish and rice and the Bhattra ate and enjoyed it and said to his wife, 'This is a very good fish.' But the son told the father how it had been obtained and he was angry and beat mother and son.

The son ran to his father's sister's house and hid there. But the woman was afraid and said, 'Don't stay here or your father will come and beat me too.' So the boy ran away to Uttelsai Raja's stables and crept under a bundle of grass. He hid till dark when the Raja's syce, a Ghasia, came to sleep by the horses. The Raja had a daughter who made love with this syce. She came at night and the boy watched them. After a long time the girl went home and the syce went to give grass to the horses. As he pulled out the grass, he caught the boy's leg and pulled him out too. The syce said, 'You've come to steal grass.'

In the morning the syce took the boy to the Raja. The Raja said, 'Why do you want grass? You're not a horse.'

The boy said, 'I am no thief. My mind my mother knows not; my mother's mind my father knows not; my father's mind your syce knows not; your syce's mind your daughter knows not; your daughter's mind you know not; your mind my organ knows not.'

The Raja, hearing this, asked what he meant. The boy told him about his mother, and how his father had beaten them, and how he had hidden in the grass and seen the syce with his daughter. 'This shows,' he said, 'that you have no wisdom, and everyone does what he will in your kingdom.'

The Raja buried the syce alive and married his daughter to the boy, and he became Diwan and made every kind of law. He started the police and ordered them to hang those who abused or beat their neighbours. He made Forest Guards to protect the jungle and told them to fine anyone who brought more than five bits of wood for his own fire. He made Amins [revenue collectors] and ordered them to measure the land.

2

BONDO

Pinnajangar, Koraput District

There was no money in the old days. But after Mahaprabhu gave the kingdom of Simapatna to Sima Raja and Sima Rani, a Government office was made to deal with everything. But the Diwan had a lot of difficulty because there was no way of paying for things.

One day Mahaprabhu took Sima Rani to the Silver Mountain and showed her great heaps of silver. 'That is silver,' he said. 'That is copper,' he said. Then he took her to the Gold Mountain and showed her great heaps of gold. 'That is gold,' he said. Then he took her to the Copper Mountain and showed her great heaps of copper. 'That is copper,' he said. When they returned home Mahaprabhu showed the Rani how to make the gold into gold coins, and the silver into rupee coins, and copper into coins worth two pice and one pice. He said, 'When the money is ready give two hundred rupees to every household in the kingdom.'

Sima Rani had silver, gold and copper brought to Simapatna and made into coins. Then she sent chaprasis with two hundred rupees for every household in her kingdom. After that everyone was able to pay for the things they wanted.

3

BONDO

Basupada, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu created all creatures, making some great and some small. He made Sima Raja and Sima Rani lords over the whole world. The Raja and his wife made their palace in Palmaska. When the Raja and Rani wanted to visit their villages they had to tour amid thorns and rocks. When Mahaprabhu saw this, he felt sorry and said, 'I made these two to be lords of the earth and they have to tour in such great discomfort.' So he called the locust and said, 'Go to the Raja and Rani and let them sit on your back and take them about.' The creature agreed.

Mahaprabhu brought some garlic and, removing the white skin, made a box and put it on the creature's back and blessed it. 'However big the world is, you can carry supplies for two-and-a-half days in this box.' Mahaprabhu himself sat on it and flew away to Sima Raja and gave it to him and after that the Raja always toured in it. In time his subjects also learnt to use the locust and flew about the country.

4

GADABA

Challanguda, Koraput District

Ispur Mahaprabhu once came to the palace of the Maharaja of Jeypore in the form of an old Brahmin. The Maharaja brought him food and drink and bade him sit down and eat. In those days there was no such thing as grain; people lived on the seed of the *siāri* creeper, roots and bamboo shoots. The Maharaja sat down with the old Brahmin and cut the bamboo shoots into little circles, gave him a handful of the big brown seeds and went back into his palace.

The old Brahmin ate a bit of bamboo, then a seed, then a bit of bamboo and then another seed. Then he put the seeds and the bamboo shoots into a leaf-cup and covered the mouth of it with a leaf. Then he went away.

Presently the Maharaja came out and found that his guest had gone. He removed the leaf from the cup and to his surprise found that the bamboo shoots which he had cut into rings had turned into silver rupees, and that the *siāri* seeds had turned into copper pice. He had no idea what they were, but thinking that the food had gone bad and that the Brahmin had gone away offended, he was on the point of throwing the stuff away. But the Brahmin came up behind him and caught him by the hand, saying, 'This is money. Don't throw it away. Keep it and use it and you will become rich.'

5

JHORIA

Sukku, Koraput District

A party of merchants was on its way to Kalinga Land with loads of oil-seed on their bullocks. The journey took them a month. On their way they came to Silbhata Hill; there was a pond with clear water below it, and they camped there. It was very hot. They took their bullocks down to the pond to drink. The bullocks plunged into the water, but the pond was very deep and they were all drowned except one old bullock who somehow managed to get out. When it struggled on to the bank, the merchants found that hundreds of cowrie shells were sticking to its back and tail. The other bullocks, they decided, must have been killed by the shells which clung to them and sapped their strength.

The merchants removed the cowries from the bullock's body, and after emptying two sacks of oil-seed filled them instead with the shells. They took them to a bazaar and used them as money, one to an anna, and were able to buy new bullocks with what they got.

6

KOYA

Gumka, Koraput District

Mankind began with Dadaburka Koya. When men increased

in number, they went to live, each in his own place. Dadaburka Koya and his wife grew very old.

One day Deur thought, 'Now all the castes are separate, but they have no leaders, none are great or small, and everyone does according to his own mind.' So Deur made a great horse and took it to Dadaburka Koya. At this time Dadaburka had with him two sons and two daughters. Deur said, 'Whichever of you two boys can mount and ride this horse will be Raja, the other will be Poroja.' So saying, he went away.

The elder son's name was Sukru, the younger's was Bhima. Bhima said to Sukru, 'You mount first, then I will.' Sukru tried hard, but could not get up, and he went to cut a bamboo to make a ladder: he put it against the creature's back and climbed up, but the horse threw him. Then Bhima and his young sister Lakshmi said, 'You can't ride; now let the horse alone and we, brother and sister, will ride.' Sukru went away and Bhima caught the horse and Bhima and Lakshmi mounted it and the horse leapt and jumped and galloped, but could not throw them. Bhima said to Sukru, 'Put my bedding on a carrying-pole and follow me. We will go round the world and see what there is in it.' They went all round the world and at last came to the hill Mahul-lakta. Bhima said, 'We will live here,' and said to Sukru, 'You can go home.'

A great house was built and Bhima and Lakshmi became man and wife and lived there. They were now Raja-Rani and Sukru went home to be a Poroja. Bhima made Amins and guards and police. Very soon the police and Amins began to trouble the people and everyone was afraid of them.

7

KOND

Amblibuwa, Koraput District

One day Jam Deota called Nirantali, for his is the authority of Government. When she came Jam Deota said, 'You look after all the other gods: now make offerings also to me.' Nirantali collected every kind of animal and took them to Jam Deota.

He looked at them, but saw no flowers and said, 'I don't like all this meat. I want flowers.'

But there were no flowers in those days, and Nirantali said, 'Where am I to get flowers?' Jam Deota said, 'Go and cut down a plantain tree, take it to the bank of the river and plant it there. Bury an egg below it and put some rice in a little basket. Tie a thread to the tree and let it be.'

Nirantali did all that Jam Deota told her. Later she came back and found red and white flowers springing up and there was fruit on the plantain. She picked the flowers and fruit, put them in a dish, added an egg and took the offering to Jam Deota. He saw the flowers and was pleased. 'This is good,' he said, 'I am the Government; these are things I want.'

So too, high officials should be given eggs and flowers and plantains when they visit Kond villages.

8

KOND

Pusbari, Kalahandi District

Formerly there were no Rajas. Nirantali called Paramugatti and Mangragatti and held a great meeting. In those days, before there was any Raja, people caught hold of any girls they wanted, they abused each other, did what they liked. There was no punishment, no judge. Kirapakenj and Kirasundenj came to Nirantali and said, 'You've created men, but they do just what they like and rape, steal and cheat.' Nirantali said, 'Well, I'll make a Raja. Who will you have?' Paramugatti and Mangragatti said, 'We'll be Rajas,' and Kirapakenj and Kirasundenj said, 'No, we'll be.'

At that moment a horse came up out of the earth and Nirantali said, 'Don't quarrel, you four; whoever can mount this horse will be the Raja.' Paramugatti and Mangragatti were afraid of the horse, but Kirapakenj and Kirasundenj jumped on its back and rode about on it. Nirantali said, 'These then are the Rajas.'

Kirapakenj and Kirasundenj did indeed become Rajas, but no one took any notice of them. Then Kiamol and Mokmal

Sahib came and they said to Kirapakenj and Kirasundenj, 'You may be Rajas but no one takes any notice of you, so give us your Raj.' They said, 'You are right: take our Raj.' Since then, there has been a foreign Government ruling over the Konds.

9

KUTTIA KOND

Bilaisarda, Ganjam District

When people were first made they all were equal. There was no great or small, rich or poor. No one took any notice of anyone or honoured anyone. There was no Raja, no Government. When Nirantali saw this, she thought it was not good. She called the people and said, 'It is not good that all should be equal.' So she made some rich, others learned, most stupid, many poor. Then they began to fear and obey each other.[1]

[1] A story recorded in Mirzapur tells how Parvati once asked Mahadeo why he made some men poor and others rich. 'Because,' he replied 'otherwise the work of the world would not go on.' 'I do not like it,' she said. So Mahadeo made all men rich. One day the roof of the temple began to leak. Parvati asked Mahadeo to send men to repair the thatch, but no one would come even for double wages. When Parvati asked the reason, Mahadeo told her that it was because everyone was too rich to need to work. 'Well, make them as they were before,' said Parvati, and ever since there have been rich and poor people in the world.—*North Indian Notes and Queries,* Vol. IV, p. 32.

PART SIX: THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF MAN

CHAPTER THIRTY

THE DISCOVERY OF FIRE

1

BHUIYA

Raisua (Bonai), Sundergarh District

After men had been created, they had to eat their food raw, for there was no fire. The gods wondered how to give men fire. They went to Janak Rusi and asked him for it. He said, 'What can I do?' They said, 'Press your thumb against the middle of your forehead.' He did so and fire came from his forehead and everything round about broke into flames. They said, 'You've made the fire; it is your business to put it out.' He did not know what to do, so at last he went to Rawan and told him to press his forehead with his thumb. When Rawan did so, water gushed out and poured over the fire. Fire was nearly destroyed, but Janak Rusi told it to hide in trees and stones.

2

BINJHWAR

Baghmara, Sambalpur District

In the old days, people ate their food raw. One day Mahadeo and Parvati went wandering across the world. What did they see? They saw men busy collecting and eating raw meat and raw grain. Parvati was filled with pity for mankind and begged Mahadeo to give them fire so that they could cook.

Mahadeo rubbed some dirt from his body and made a fly. He sent it to Bhagavan. Bhagavan said to the fly, 'What do you want?' The fly said, 'I want fire.' Bhagavan rubbed his body and brought out fire and put it in the fly's buttocks. The fly came burning, burning to Mahadeo. Mahadeo took the fire quickly and gave it to men, teaching them how to cook their food.

But a little of the fire was left in the fly's buttocks and it became the first fire-fly.

3

BONDO

Tulagram, Koraput District

In the days when men used to eat their food raw, Mahaprabhu was wandering through the jungle. He got tired and sat down to rest underneath a clump of bamboos. When his weariness left him, he felt hungry. He had a desire to cook something. He took two bits of bamboo and rubbed one bit across the other, and out came fire. With this he cooked his food, ate it and went his way. But from the fire left in the hearth the whole jungle was set ablaze. Some of the animals ran away and escaped, others were burnt in the flames.

When the fire died down, the Bondos went to the jungle and found many animals lying roasted among the ashes. They cut them up and ate them. They liked the taste and decided always to have their food like that. But fire had disappeared. They searched for it crying, 'Where is this thing that makes our food taste so good?' Fire was hiding in the branch of a tree. They broke it off, rubbed the pieces against each other and were able to catch fire again.

4

DIDAYI

Patroputtu, Koraput District

There were many Bondos living in Bulgarh. There was no fire in those days. One day the Chief and his deputy went to drink palm-wine at the Chief's tree outside the village. They got very drunk and came home quarrelling. They had their bows and arrows and when they reached the village, they fired at each other. The arrows struck each other in mid-air and there was a flash which set fire to one of the houses. The people quickly gathered and tried to quench the flames, but they did not know what to do for they had never seen such a thing before. All the animals in the house, two pigs, a goat and a few fowls, were burnt. The Bondos collected the charred bodies from the ashes; they smelt good and they sat down to eat them. When they did they

found that cooked food was much more tasty than raw.

Since then men have always used fire, which was created by the meeting of two arrows.

5

GADABA

San Duralu, Koraput District

There was no fire and no water at first. Bhimo Raja shot at a score of frogs with his bow and arrow, but every time he missed and his arrows went into a bamboo. As the arrows pierced the bamboo, flames shot out and the hills and forests caught fire. Then Indar thought, 'All the men and animals in the world will die through this fire.' He thought so hard that he began to yawn, and from his mouth fell a few drops of saliva. From this the seven Singraj sisters were born; they are the maidens of water, the seven streams and the seven oceans. They went to the Middle World and began to fight with the fire.

When the rain fell strongly upon it, fire hid in trees and stones. When the rain got tired of falling, the fire again came out and began to burn. The seven sisters of water came and stood before fire with folded hands and said, 'Brother, you have conquered us; from today you will be the greater.' Since then water and fire have been like man and wife. Fire is the husband and water is the wife.

6

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

Originally the Gadabas used to eat their food raw. One day the Maharaja of Jeypore went hunting and as he made his way through the forest he came to the Madras boundary. It was near Nandpur; there was a lake there called Raniband. The Maharaja camped on the bank and cooked a pot of rice and a pot of curry. He did not eat very much and next morning, when he continued with the hunt, he left the pots behind. That day five Gadaba brothers, who were also out hunting, came to the lake. They

saw the pots, examined them, found food inside, and ate it. 'This is very good,' they said. 'We must always have food like this.' They took the pots home and after that they began to cook their food.

7

GADABA

Challanguda, Koraput District

Suoldai, the daughter of Dharmo Mahaprabhu, was mad. But she was beautiful as fire. She had long hair which sparkled like fire. Mahaprabhu kept her shut up in an iron house; he made a moat of water all round it.

When Suoldai grew up, she began to think about getting a husband. But Mahaprabhu would not allow any man to go near her. This made her very angry and she broke the iron house open and came out. When she stood on the bank of the moat, the water dried up immediately. She went into the world and wandered from place to place searching for a husband, but everyone who saw her was frightened.

One day, as she went, a hair fell from her head into some long grass and it caught fire. So great was the blaze that it burnt even the gods. They did their best to put it out, but it was too strong for them. Mahaprabhu tried to catch his daughter, but she escaped. He said to the gods, 'Go and tell Bhimo Mahaprabhu about this; he may be able to do something.' The gods went to Bhimo Mahaprabhu and wept before him. Bhimo therefore took his club and killed Suoldai. Her blood fell down to the Middle World and brought fire with it.

8

JHORIA

Parjamanda, Koraput District

The great blacksmiths and the little blacksmiths lived on Onjur Hill. There you did not even mention the word 'soil', for everything was black rock and iron. Loha Deota lived among the rocks.

One day Loha Deota gave a dream to the blacksmiths. 'Dig

here,' he said, 'and you will find the means of wealth.' The blacksmiths got up at dawn and dug among the rocks. They had no tools of iron at that time, but they broke the rocks with heavy stones. As they were breaking the rocks, sparks flew out and set fire to the grass near by. There was a great fire, the first in the world, and it destroyed all the forest round Koraput town.

9

JHORIA

Sukku, Koraput District

In the old days people used to eat raw food. One day the gods assembled in the shrine of a certain village. The priest was sitting near by and heard what they were saying. They were not satisfied with their sacrifices. 'We have to eat raw flesh and drink raw blood, and it tastes horrible. Unless the priest cooks for us, we shall kill him and his children.'

When the priest heard this, he was very alarmed and the next morning he went out to find someone who could tell him what 'cooking' was. After going a long way, he came to Dudhjora Hill. There he found Mother Basmoti, in the form of an old woman, cooking on a hearth made of three stones. The priest asked her what she was doing. 'I am cooking dinner for Dharmo Deota,' she said. 'Show me how to do it', said the priest and she showed him.

In the evening the priest returned. He sacrificed a cow before the shrine and cooked the meat and blood, with some rice, just as Mother Basmoti had done. He served the gods, and he and the villagers ate what was left. They found it so good that ever since men have cooked their food.

10

JUANG

Pitanari, Keonjhar District

Rusi and Rusain had twelve sons and thirteen daughters. One day Rusain took her youngest daughter with her to the swidden and put her to sleep beneath a tree. While she was away

working in the clearing an Asurin came and stole the child. That Asurin had eleven daughters. Now she had twelve.

These twelve used to stay at home. The Asurin used to go out to graze, for she fed as a goat feeds. One day as Rusi's twelve sons roamed through the forest hunting they came to the Asurin's house. Night fell and they sent the youngest brother to get them fire. He called to the girls in the house, but they said, 'We are naked; how can we give you fire?' But the boy saw the youngest girl's thing and his mind stayed there. Each of the brothers came and each saw the thing of one of the sisters and one and all were caught by that magic. The youngest girl brought the fire from her thing and gave it to the boys. They cooked and ate. They had never eaten cooked food before. Drunk with the taste of it they returned to the Asurin's house, seeking the source of fire. Then came the Asurin and the girls changed the boys into flies. The Asurin cried, 'Man-smell, man-smell.' But the youngest daughter, she who had been stolen, said, 'Of course there is man-smell; am not I a human being? You had better eat me.' The Asurin went to sleep and the girls changed the flies back into boys but they were afraid and ran away. Only the youngest boy remained. He took fire from the girl's thing and cooked beef and they were filled with pleasure. His girl was soon pregnant and a son was born. The boy taught them how to make clearings in the jungle and how to cause a spring to flow by throwing black and yellow rice on a rock. This boy was the father of the Juangs and since he took fire from his wife's thing we honour fire and we never piss upon it.

II

JUANG

Tilkuda, Keonjhar District

Fire came from the lightning; she was one of the heavenly maidens, Bijli Kantya. She plays hide-and-seek with her hus-

[1] For a discussion of the belief that fire was elicited from a woman's body, see J. G. Frazer, *Myths of the Origin of Fire* (London, 1930), pp. 220 f. and G. J. Held, *The Mahabharata* (London, 1935), pp. 140 f. Cf. a Kol story and a Muria story in MMI, pp. 113 ff.

band. When he chases her, she stumbles and falls to the ground and from her bright body comes the fire.

12

JUANG

Balipal, Keonjhar District

Of old there was no fire. Men ate their food raw. Rusi and Rusain went to find fire. In the jungle they discovered a dried up *agmutri* tree. The other trees were fresh and green. Rusi broke the branches of the dry tree and fire came out.

13

JUANG

Pitanari, Keonjhar District

At first there was no fire. The people used to eat their food raw. One day Rusi and Rusain took their digging-sticks and went to dig up roots. As they dug, Rusain's stick struck against a stone. Fire came out and blazed up fiercely. Rusi and his wife fled in fear. 'This thing is going to eat us,' they thought. The fire ate the grass, trees, leaves, fruit, everything. But when it saw Rusi and Rusain running away, it called loudly to them. 'I am Karikar Deota,' it said. 'If you run away, I will eat everything.' They turned back at that and the fire spoke again. 'Bring your eldest son; offer him to me; and give me a place to live.'

Rusi and Rusain came weeping with their eldest son and killed him before the fire. Karikar Deota was very pleased and said, 'Now where shall I live?' Rusi said, 'You may live in the stones and trees.' Since that day there has been fire in wood and stone.

14

KAMAR

Tipajhir (Khariar), Kalahandi District

At the time of Rama's attack on Lanka, Hanuman set fire to

the city. But when Rawan saw it he cried, 'Let all the fire in the world be quenched.' So the fire died down and all over the world fires went out and there was nothing for light or cooking.

When Hanuman saw the great power of Rawan, he was afraid and went to the shore of the ocean and said to Nirankar Swami, 'Rama will be put to shame if there is no fire in the world.' Nirankar Swami said, 'Rub your forehead and fire will be born of it, such fire as Rawan's father will not be able to quench.' Hanuman rubbed his forehead and there came out the fire that remains in the world to this day.

15

KONDA DORA

Sarum, Koraput District

In Gulaguda lived a Dora Raja and his Rani. They had no children. There was no fire anywhere. Men soaked rice in water and ate it. So many days passed.

One day the Raja had a dream. In the jungle he saw many monkeys gathered together. They were washing rice and, putting it in hollow bamboos, were cooking it over a fire. The Raja went to the monkeys and saw how the rice was cooked. The monkeys explained that they were cooking. 'We can't eat raw rice as men do.' The Raja begged a little rice and ate it and found it tasted good. He said, 'We too must cook.' He awoke and told his Rani.

Next morning the Raja went to the place of his dream to get fire. But there was no rice, no monkey, no fire. He wandered through the jungle and got nothing. Disappointed, he came home. On the way he met a green parrot, and it asked him what he was doing. The Raja told it. The parrot said, 'Cut a *kissol* tree and get fire from it.' The Raja had no axe. So the parrot cut the wood with its beak and made a slit in the middle, and then prepared a rod. It said, 'Take this home, put two pillars in the ground, lay this wood across them, and then you and your wife hold the rod and rub it to and fro across the beam.'

The Raja took the wood home and next day they arranged it as the parrot had said and the Raja and Rani pushed and pulled

for eight days and nine nights until at last fire was born. They brought more wood and piled it up and it caught fire. Then the Raja cooked some rice and gave it to the Rani. The neighbours came to watch: they took fire and began to cook.

This is why the Dora caste honours Aginjhar Deota.

16

KOND

Demili, Ganjam District

Men used to soak grain in water and eat it raw. Bura Pinnu wanted to make fire for men and went out to find it. He travelled right round the world but he could not find it. He cut trees but there was no fire, he broke stones but there was no fire.

As he was going home he came to the hill called Ranisoru and began to cut grass and trees as usual. At last he found fire in a wild cotton tree; it blazed up and the little finger of his left hand was burnt. Then the fire went back into the tree and Bura Pinnu could not find it. So he picked up all the trees he had cut and took them home and after drying them in the sun he rubbed one against the other, above a heap of dry leaves. He called Pusuroli his sister and the two made a drill and whirled it all day but there was no fire.

Then in the evening Bura Pinnu's wife Darni Pinnu came and took her turn and now the fire came and the leaves caught. Bura Pinnu made a cheroot and lit it; he made a pile of dry grass and leaves and lit it with the cheroot. Then he set fire to a pile of wood and there was plenty of fire to be distributed to mankind.

17

KUTTIA KOND

Karkori, Ganjam District

At the time when Nirantali and Paramugatti and Mangragatti were born there was no fire. When men were born they cultivated and there was grain. But there was no fire to cook it.

Nirantali and Kittung often wondered how to make fire. One day they called Paramugatti and Mangragatti and said, 'Go to Nachikeri-Kudakeri and cut down whatever branches catch in your hair as you go along.'

They went but not a single branch caught in their hair and they turned homewards disappointed. But on the way at last a branch of the *nachikamba* shrub caught their hair. They cut the branch and gave it to Nirantali and Kittung. They stripped the bark and put it out to dry in the sun. They cut it in two, made a hole in one bit and made a rod of the other. Nirantali and Kittung rubbed it till fire came and with this they set fire first to dry leaves, then to bits of dry wood, and so distributed it to all men.

18

KUTTIA KOND

Bandika, Ganjam District

At the very beginning Nirantali was born in Saphaganna with fire in her hand. From this fire light spread over the hills and forests. Nirantali said to Paramugatti, 'This fire has become unclean. It will go out soon and will no longer light the world. Make some new fire instead.' Paramugatti was frightened and said, 'Where will I get fire?' Nirantali said, 'Go to Kandabara Hill and you'll find fire there.'

In the midst of the hill, Paramugatti found a great rock, and when he had lifted it he found fire below. When the fire saw Paramugatti it tried to hide; it dived under rocks and jumped into trees. Paramugatti chased it and with great difficulty found a few sparks. These he brought to Nirantali and gave them to her. Nirantali said to him, 'Make a fire.' He made a big pile of wood and fired it. The blaze was so tremendous that it has never gone out and since then there has been fire all over the world.

19

SAORA

Kusudda, Sambalpur District

Janko Raja ruled in Golkonda. He had one daughter named

Bijli. Her parents used to keep her shut up in the house and never let her go out. When she was mature no Raja came for her.

One day Bali Raja's son Shubhas Chandra came to the kingdom and sat down in Janko Raja's house. They asked where he came from and whose son he was. Shubhas Chandra told them and Janko Raja asked him to stay for a time, for he wanted to marry his daughter to him. The boy stayed, and he was soon betrothed to the girl. When the marriage arrangements were ready, he sent the news to his parents. At the marriage the girl was kept shut up in a bamboo basket and the people wondered whether the youth was being married to a girl or to a basket.

Next day, Janko Raja sent his son-in-law and the bride away, saying, 'Go, but don't open the basket on the way.' As they went, however, the marriage-party grew curious and said, 'Let's open the basket and look at the girl.' They opened it and out flew the girl into the sky. The bridegroom chased her with his bow but could not catch her, so he fired at her, but missed and the arrow stuck in a *sarai* tree and set it on fire.

The whole jungle was burnt in this way and fire came into the world.

20

SAORA

Garbhone, Sambalpur District

In Kertalmamrigarh, Kechkecha acted as Gogia Pardhan for the Saoras and Binjhwars there. Ghaiso Raja lived in Indargarh. In those days there was no fire.

Kechkecha and his wife went on a begging tour to the Raja: the day before they arrived the Raja's father died. They were just about to perform the funerary ceremonies, when the Gogia arrived. When they had finished he sat for his ritual dues, the Dan.

The Raja said, 'Here is everything, but there is no fire: go and get it and I'll give you your Dan. If you don't you'll get no Dan in future.' The Gogia was very depressed at this, but he went to Kartabali Hill near by, where the Binjhwar's great goddess Binjhbasni Devi lived. He wept before her and she

asked why. The Gogia asked for fire. Binjhbasni Devi said, 'Rub my belly very hard.' He did so and from her mouth sparks flew out and fell on a dry bamboo and it caught fire and the whole forest was soon ablaze. The Gogia found a burning *sarai* branch, put it on his shoulder and took it to the Raja's yard. The Raja gave him Dan of cows, buffaloes, gold, silver and himself cooked a feast for him.[1]

21

HILL SAORA

Bodo Okhra, Ganjam District

One day on the Rawangiri Mountain, Kittung Mahaprabhu broke open a rock and fire came out. The rock burst and a bit of it flew up and hurt his head on the left side. So fierce was the fire that Kittung's hands and feet also were burnt; the wounds were so bad that he remained lame and maimed on Rawangiri. The fire spread and burnt the whole jungle and many animals were killed. Men found the burnt carcasses and ate them; they liked the taste and took the fire home to their houses. Formerly they had eaten their meat raw, but now they began to cook. They made an image of the maimed Kittung[2] from *abba* wood and worshipped it.

22

HILL SAORA

Potta, Koraput District

When the earth was submerged beneath the waters, Kittung and his sister took refuge in a gourd. When they reached land, they broke it open and came out. They made insects to devour trees, put bugs in the water and created diseases to affect everything and everyone. In the end Kittung found that he had put

[1] The Gogias are a branch of the Pardhans. They have the right to visit Gonds and, in some areas, Saoras of their own clan, and claim from them ritual gifts called Dan at marriages and funerals. In return the Gogias entertain the company by the recital of traditional ballads. See Hivale, pp. 50 ff.

[2] An image of the maimed Kittung was kept in a shrine at Bodo Okhra: it is illustrated in my *Tribal Art of Middle India,* p. 119.

disease in everything but fire. He tried to make fire-disease but it was impossible. He got an unfired earthen pot, filled it with fire and blew into it and his breath went into the fire. Then he said to men, 'Put out the fires in your houses.' Kittung took his fire to the *sargiya* tree and put it there and said to men, 'There is fire in the *sargiya* tree: cut it and get fire.' They cut the trees and burnt them and there was smoke but no flame. Since then there has been smoke—which is the disease of fire.

23

HILL SAORA

Potta, Koraput District

On Kurain Hill lived Ramma and Bimma. They got no proper food, only leaves and roots in the jungle. They had no fire to cook with and this gave them a lot of trouble.

One day they brought dry leaves and wood and began to husk them together to make flour for meal. As they husked the wood the dry leaves caught fire. Ramma and Bimma kept the fire carefully; they made a hole in a rock and put the fire into it. After shutting it up with a stone, they went to Kittung and told him about it.

Kittung said, 'Go to the jungle and kill the first animal you find. Then get your fire and roast the flesh and eat it and you'll see how good it tastes.'

Ramma and Bimma caught a hare. They roasted it and had a feast.

24

HILL SAORA

Bungding, Koraput District

A boy and a girl went to dig roots in the jungle. Twelve hours passed and they got very hungry. The girl said, 'Make a fire, cook something and when we've eaten we'll go home.' But they could not find any fire. The girl began to cry. The boy lay down and slept. In a dream Ramma and Bimma said to him, 'You two lie together.' He awoke and told the girl. She said,

'How can we?' and began to cry again. But the boy forced her and his seed came strong and fierce as fire. Some of it fell on a bit of wood and it blazed up. After that men and women used to make fire together: the woman held the hearth and the man worked the drill.

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

THE FIRST HOUSES AND THEIR FURNITURE

1

BINJHWAR

Baghmara, Sambalpur District

Originally men did not know how to build houses and they lived in trees.

There were twelve brothers. They had many children, but at night while they slept a Dano came and ate them one by one.

They went in despair from place to place in the jungle; they set traps; they sat up all night; but it was of no avail. The Dano continued to eat their children.

One night a sadhu came to them. He was white in colour, and he stood before them with his trident. 'Why aren't you sleeping?' he asked. 'Because some creature eats our children, one by one, in the night.' The sadhu cut a bamboo and made a bow and arrows. 'Take these,' he said, 'and no creature will attack you. Go to hunt and kill animals in the forest. As the bow bends, make houses with roofs bent over the walls. So long as the bow remains in your hands, you will have no trouble.'

2

BONDO

Kichchipoda, Koraput District

Two brothers were born out of the earth. The elder lived on dirt and the younger ate cowdung. The elder brother soon died but the other who lived on cowdung survived.

One day Mahaprabhu visited the place and said to the man, 'Here is some grain, eat this instead of cowdung.' The man took it and ate it just as it was, raw and unhusked.

Then one day a rat visited the place and removed the outer husks of the grain with its sharp teeth. The man said, 'What

are you doing?' The rat said, 'You will find that the grain is much easier to eat if you remove the husk. Make a hole in the ground, and plaster it with mud and cowdung. Then make a pestle and husk your grain with it.' Now the man was able to eat husked grain, but he still did not know how to cook it.

One day he brought a hollow bamboo and filled it with grain and water and put it in the fire. When he took it out and ate the grain, he found that it was soft and tasty.

Later on Mahaprabhu created potters and they made pots for men to cook in.

3

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

An old woman called Telparurni lived on Telpar Hill. She spent her whole life in the extraction of oil. If she caught a bird or animal, she would take out the oil and eat the flesh. The ground and rocks round her house in time became black and slippery with oil—it can still be seen.

Not far away, in a village, lived twelve clans of Gadabas. Their names were Totapariya, Bondapariya, Gadabapariya, Onchalpariya, Silpariya, Mundagriya, Gumalpariya, Sulapariya, Janiguriya, Gachpariya, Surguniyapariya, Sunakediyapariya. At the time of the Chait Parab Festival they went to hunt hares. As they went through the forest, they came to Telpar Hill and sat down to rest. A little way off they saw smoke rising into the air and said to one another, 'Who can this be? Surely there's no one living here.'

They got up and went towards the place where the fire was. They found the old woman taking the oil from a fat hare. When she saw the Gadabas, she was very pleased. "I'll get plenty to eat today,' she thought. 'But I'll have to be careful, for there are so many of them.' And she said aloud, 'Come, my sons, come. I have not seen you for a very long time, not since you were babies. I am your mother's elder sister. Why not stay here tonight and go on your way tomorrow.' The brothers wondered if what she said was true and were afraid that they

would be eaten by her while they were asleep. They asked her, 'What work do you do? What do you get to eat?' She replied, 'I have no one to keep me company. I am alone. I press oil for my living. I eat anything I can get.'

Then the old woman cooked some meat in oil and fed the brothers and they were pleased and lay down to sleep. In the middle of the night the old woman took the youngest brother, and was about to kill and eat him when he shouted and awoke the others. They surrounded the woman and were going to kill her, but she said, 'Don't kill me. It was just a little joke. Let me go home with you and I'll work for you pressing oil.'

So the brothers took her to their village and she taught the women there how to press oil.

4

GADABA

Kujambo, Koraput District

Birsa Raja of Onkarput had a son named Subro. When the boy was grown up, his father began to worry about getting him married. He went everywhere in search of a daughter-in-law, but could not find one and at last went below the earth thinking there might be someone there. On the way he met Vidarnagin who asked him, 'Raja sahib, where are you going?' When he told her she said, 'I have a daughter, Champa, and if you like her, I'll give her to you for your son.' The Raja said, 'Let me see her and I will decide.' He went with the cobra to her house, saw the girl and went home. After a few days he took his son to the cobra's house and celebrated the marriage there.

When it was time for the girl to go to her father-in-law's house, her mother cut off the end of her own tail and said, 'Sweep your house with this, and when it is worn out throw it secretly into a stream and broom-trees will spring up.' The girl did as her mother told her and in this way the feathery reed came to the world, and people learnt to use brooms.

5

GADABA

Uppara Duralu, Koraput District

A Parenga named Sobhari lived in Gubbupada. He had five daughters. In those days there was no such thing as a pestle or mortar; people husked the grain in their hands. It was such tiresome work that the nails came out of their fingers. One day the five daughters said to Sobhari, 'Father, make us something to do this work with, for we are losing our nails and our hands are being ruined.'

The Parenga went from village to village seeking some instrument to husk with. At last he came to the hill Maunidongar. He met a wild cow and asked it if it knew of anything. The cow showed him how to make a pestle of catechu wood. But Sobhari had not even got an axe to cut the wood or fashion it. The cow said, 'Shake my left horn.' He shook the left horn and an axe, a chisel and an adze fell out. With these Sobhari was able to cut the tree and make a mortar and pestle. When they were ready he took them home and his daughters used them.

They now had no more trouble and soon the neighbours began to follow their example.

6

GOND

Banuaguda, Koraput District

In Kokora village there lived a potter called Kosaliya. This potter had six brothers and they all had children, but he himself was childless, for his wife was a witch. He took a great deal of medicine and called many shamans to find out how this condition could be changed, but it was no use. So after a time he took a second wife and in due course the girl conceived and when her time came, she gave birth to male twins.

The potter loved his young wife and sons and neglected the older woman who had not given him a child. She grew jealous and did her best to kill the young wife and her children. One day she went to the hill Kandadongar where there lived a god

called Mardi. As she went along she picked up some dust from the path, pissed on it, and made it into a lamp. She used her urine for oil and the hair of her head for a wick. When she reached the hill she stripped herself naked and lit the lamp and danced before the god. When he saw her dancing he was pleased and asked her why she had come. She said, 'My co-wife has two sons. If you will come with me and kill them, I will give them to you to eat.' The god agreed and the witch led him back to her house, lighting the way through the darkness by her lamp.

The potter was standing outside his house wondering where the woman had gone and when he saw her coming with the lighted lamp, he asked her what it was, for previously there had been no lamps in the world. She told him to make twenty-one lamps of the same kind and light them in honour of Mardi. He, not understanding her wickedness, did so and filled the lamps with oil and made wicks of fresh cotton. But Mardi, attracted by the light, came to the house and killed the two little boys, and the witch gave them to him to eat.

7

KONDA DORA

Borabandha, Koraput District

On Chaktadongar Hill lived four Bondo brothers and their wives. Each had four sons. In those days there were no grindstones and the people ground up grain as if it was salt, with their curry-stones. This gave them a lot of trouble.

One day Bhimdeo came and seeing them grinding said, 'Why do you take so much trouble? Make a grindstone and your work will be done quickly.' 'Mahaprabhu, we don't know how to make a grindstone. What shall we do?' Bhimdeo cut off half of each of his two buttocks to serve as stones and cut off one of his toes as a peg and made a wooden handle. He put one buttock on top of the other and showed the people how to grind. Later they used stones instead.

8

KOND

Dengsargi, Kalahandi District

Originally men lived in trees, in caves, in pits, separately, and when anyone died, they left the body where it was—there was no burial or burning or even throwing away.

One day Nirantali went to visit mankind and said, 'Why do you live in this miserable way?' She went into a cave and found a child lying sick, with worms on his face and flies swarming over him. He had nothing to eat. Nirantali said, 'How has this happened?' The child said, 'I have no parents and no one to look after me.'

Nirantali called the people and said, 'You live in pits, caves, and trees, each separately by himself, so tigers kill you, snakes bite you, no one helps his neighbour. From today live like neighbours. Make your houses of branches and leaves, in long rows.' This they did and so learnt to help each other. Gradually they learnt to make houses of grass.

Then Nirantali showed them how to use bamboos and said, 'Make your houses in two rows and in between build a place where you can sit.'

9

KUTTIA KOND

Kumrabali, Ganjam District

When grain was first made, Nirantali had nothing to grind it with. She went to Suti-duki River and brought a big stone and cut it in two. She chipped at it with a chisel till it was ready, and made a hole in the middle. This took eight days. She brought some *dhāman* wood from Golpada and made a handle. Then she called Nachipuju and gave her two measures of millet to grind.

10

KUTTIA KOND

Kumrabali, Ganjam District

Nirantali first brought to birth Paramugatti and his wife Nachipuju. After they were born, they had to make a house. When the house was ready, they found a lot of mess and dust. There was nothing to clean it with. They tried to do it with their hands and got pricked with thorns. So Nirantali saw she must make something for them. She looked everywhere until at last she saw some grass in Sutiduki stream. She went to the place, cut the grass and dried it on the roof for eight days, then moistened it with water, pounded the lower ends to make them workable, tied it up in bundles and at last called Paramugatti and his wife and they cleaned their house with the brooms.

11

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

At first, men had to eat grain raw, for they did not know how to make a hearth. Then they tried cooking in bamboos: they piled wood up, set fire to it and put the grain in a hollow bamboo with water, stoppered it and put it in the fire. But often the food was burnt.

Men went to Nirantali and told her what had happened and she promised to see to it. She went to Gunji-ano River and brought some red earth and made a hearth. When it was ready she called men and showed them how to use it.

12

PARENGA

Tetlipada, Koraput District

In the old days the gods used to come looking just like human beings to eat the food offered to them in sacrifice. One day, at the time of the Chait Parab Festival, Pat Deota, who was the

Raja of the gods, came with Nissani Deota and many others to eat their sacrifices. They went round the village, and when they saw the dirt and mess, they cried '*Chi-chi*' and went and sat outside under a tree. The priest and Chief went to them with folded hands and said, 'What is the matter? How have we offended you?' Pat Deota said, 'We are too great to sit down in the midst of your filth. From today sacrifice to us outside the village, for we cannot eat where there is so much dirt.'

The Chief said, 'We too dislike the dirt in which we live, but how are we to make the place clean?' Pat Deota said, 'Go to my sister Thakurani; she will tell you what to do.' The Chief went to Thakurani and told her what had happened. She scratched her head and a hair came out. She threw it on the ground and it turned into grass. She picked it, tied it together into a bundle and said, 'Here is a broom; use it to clean your house and village.'

13

SAORA

Nawagaon, Koraput District

At the beginning there was no rope or cord, and nothing to make it with. But as they began to work in fields, men found themselves more and more in need of rope.

One day two Saora brothers, Janglo and Manglo, went to catch fish. They caught five big crabs and many fish and brought them home in the evening. On the way Janglo and Manglo thought, 'Let's cook and eat the crabs here in the jungle and we'll take the fish home.' So they made a fire and cut open the crabs. They took out their entrails and threw them away. With the entrails was the bile. Then Janglo and Manglo went home.

The entrails and the bile sank into the ground and during the rains the bile turned into a hemp plant which grew and spread. One day Mahaprabhu gave a dream to Adu Paik and he cut the hemp and tried to remove the fibre, but did not manage very well. Next night Mahaprabhu again came in a dream, saying, 'Put the plant in water for seven days and then you will be able to get the fibre.'

14

HILL SAORA

Kamalasingi, Koraput District

At first men lived under trees: they were small then, only about two feet high. In the rains they found life very troublesome and decided to dig holes in the ground and live like hares. But the roofs fell in and buried many of them alive. In this way the population decreased.

Then Jangu Saora decided to build a house. First he used the leaves of the toddy palm and made a house like an umbrella as we make shrines today. In such houses men lived for many years. Later, they made similar houses out of wood and these buildings were dry and pleasant. At last, in order to be near each other, they made houses in rows.

15

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

When men first lived under the earth, they ate leaves and grass. Then from the sky Kittung said, 'Are you human beings or animals? How can you live in holes in the ground and eat leaves? Come out and build houses and live properly.' So they came out of their holes and made houses of leaves, each on his own hill. In the rains the houses leaked, so Kittung showed the people how to plaster them with mud. They sowed millet, but they did not know how to grind it and took it raw. Kittung showed them how to dry and grind the grain between stones, to make bread, putting it in fire wrapped in leaves and to eat it roasted. They made a grindstone of wood, but it did not work; then they made one of stone. But there was no place to cook. Now at this time, when men died the neighbours buried them, but left their heads sticking out of the ground. The people broke the skulls and used them as hearths.

16

HILL SAORA

Ragaisingi, Ganjam District

At first men slept on the ground, for no one knew how to make cots. In the rains, when the ground was wet, they found it very troublesome; scorpions bit them and insects got into their ears.

Kittung saw this and felt sorry; he decided that people must have cots, 'for if they have trouble like this' he said, 'they will die. Men must be happy if they are to live.'

Kittung took Brajo Saora to Talamari Hill for wood and strong creepers for rope and made a cot and took it home. There Brajo made cots for each member of his family and they slept on them. But they decided it would be wrong to couple on them.

17

HILL SAORA

Talasingi, Ganjam District

Tummal Saora lived in Mulyasingi. In the days before there were pestles and mortars people used to husk rice by rubbing it in their hands and they wearied of the task. When Garenjasum saw it he came to Tummal and said, 'Come with me, and I will show you how to husk.' The god took the Saora to a *mussaniya* tree and said, 'Cut a branch and strip it carefully. Fix an iron ferrule at the tip. Then your wife can husk the grain quickly.' So saying Garenjasum went away. Tummal cut the branch and prepared it; from the blacksmith he got an iron ferrule and fitted it to the tip. His wife began to husk and her work was soon done.

18

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

Long ago there was a little family of four brothers and two sisters. Their parents died when they were small and they lived alone. In this household, the youngest brother and sister never

did any work, no work at all; everything was done by the older children.

The little brother and sister, however, were clever with their hands and they used to play at pot-making. One day the eldest brother was in a temper because there was so much work to do, and he smashed all the little pots and beat the children, telling them not to make any more. But they took no notice and went on making their pots.

Gradually they grew up, but they still refused to do any work in the fields. Finally the others decided not to give them any food and turned them out of the house. The children took refuge in a little shed and continued making pots. One day the eldest brother went again and smashed everything they had made. The children wept loudly and at the sound the broken potsherds came together of their own accord.

Indaraika Kittung heard the noise of weeping and came to see what was the matter. The children told him their story and he was pleased and taught them how to make pots properly.

But the eldest brother came yet again and began to break the pots. But the Kittung killed him and sprinkled his blood on the pots, turning them red. The Kittung said to the two children, 'From today you will be potters and you will make your living by this work.'

In the early days, when the potters made their pots, they used to sacrifice a human being to Indaraika Kittung.[1] But long long ago they gave it up and offered fowls instead.

19

HILL SAORA

Dantara, Ganjam District

Men and women used to sweep their houses with their hands but this hurt them and led to sores and wounds.

In Hardasingi village lived one Roklo Gumang. He had a daughter, Rangit by name; it was his only daughter so he did not give her in marriage to anyone, for he wanted to keep a boy for

[1] From the records, however, it is very doubtful whether the Saoras ever practised human sacrifice.

her in his house. But no boy was ready to serve in this way.

At last, however, Sopi, the shaman of Kukurdu, gave his son and he and Rangit were married. One day about a year later, the girl was clearing the mess in front of the house: it took all day and in the evening when the sun went down the place was still not clean. The girl wept and Labosum [1] pushed a broom up from below and it came into her hand. She seized it and the place was clean immediately.

The girl sat down weary and slept and saw Labosum who said, 'When you go to bathe, take the broom with you, break it by the spring and throw the bits all round and reeds for other brooms will grow up.'

[1] The Saora Earth-god.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

CLOTHES, ORNAMENTS AND TATTOOING

Clothes

I

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

Mahaprabhu made all men and divided them into castes and races. At first men lived naked. In Orongel [1], there was a man called Kattia Ganda. He had a grown-up son and daughter. He was anxious about getting the boy married and went to find a wife for him. On his way he came to a river and cooked his dinner on the bank. Near by were two cotton trees and the trees sang to him:

> O Mahaprabhu, you have set us in the world,
> Yet all men go naked.
> If this Ganda knew how to take out cotton
> And make it into yarn and cloth,
> He could give cloth to men
> And they would no longer be ashamed,
> And we trees could mix with men.
> He could get money and be rich.

The Ganda listened as he cooked; he ate his food and then picked the cotton and took it home. That night Mahaprabhu came to him in a dream and told him how to make yarn and a loom. Mahaprabhu brought him implements and put them in his courtyard. The Ganda started weaving and sold the cloth and soon had enough money to arrange the marriages of his children.

[1] Warangal, traditional home of the Bhattras.

2

GADABA

Pottapad, Koraput District

On Manjhali Hill lived Galusi Dom and his wife. In a dream Galusi saw a cotton plant on Kanlassi Hill. It said to him, 'Take me home and make my yarn into cloth.' The Dom said, 'I don't know how to make cloth. What am I to do?' The plant said, 'Do as you like and I will see to it.'

Next day Galusi went to the hill and put the flowers of the plant into his mouth and brought them home. He spun thread and began to weave cloth. When it was ready, husband and wife put on clothes. They threw the seeds in front of their house and in time plants sprang up.

One day Sukari Gadaba came hunting and seeing the clothes asked what they were. The Dom was weaving and when the Gadaba saw him he learnt what to do. But he could not get cotton thread. So he cut a *kereng* shrub and spun thread from its bark and made bark-cloth.

3

GADABA

Sulapadi, Koraput District

At first the twelve Gadaba brothers and their sister lived completely naked. The brothers used to go out every day to hunt, leaving their sister and their wives at home. When they came back in the evening, their sister would tell them all sorts of tales about their wives, how one was idle, another faithless, a third quarrelsome. As a result of this the brothers were always beating their wives who soon decided that they must get rid of the sister who told stories against them.

So one day they said to her, 'Come, let us go to dig roots in the jungle.' They went a long way, and when they came to a very dense part of the forest they all ran away quickly, leaving the girl alone. She cried and shouted for help, but there was no one to hear her. She went weeping through the trees until she came to Medka Hill.

Now on Medka Hill there lived an old woman named Makranani. She spent her days making cloth with *kereng* thread. She heard the girl's cries and said to herself, 'Not today, not yesterday, have I heard such cries. Who can this be?' And she got up and went out to find the girl. She brought her to her house and said, 'Don't be afraid. I am your mother's elder sister. Here nobody will bother you. I live all alone. Stay with me and I will be very happy. All the work you need do is to fetch me a little water.'

The old woman made bark-cloth for the girl and dressed her and taught her how to extract the thread from *kereng* bark and how to make a loom and weave. After a time Makranani died, and the girl was again left alone. She wandered through the forest weeping.

The twelve brothers had gone out to hunt, and they heard the sound of someone crying. 'We have never heard such a thing before,' they said. 'Let us see what it is.' They searched and at last found the girl. When they saw that it was their sister they took her home. She made cloth for her twelve sisters-in-law and gradually they learnt to make it for themselves.

4

JHORIA

Kerba, Koraput District

An old tiger and its wife lived in the jungle. They got no food and being hungry went one day to a village and carried off a pregnant woman. First they broke open the belly and the child, a baby girl, came out. They thought, 'We won't eat the child, but only the mother.' When the girl grew up, the time came for the tigress to die and it said to its husband, 'If the other tigers see this girl they'll eat her. Wrap her up in my skin.' After the tigress had died, the tiger removed the skin and when it had wrapped the girl in it, she looked like a tigress. One day the twelve Gadaba brothers went hunting and found the old tiger and killed it. The girl, thinking they would kill her also, jumped up and ran for her life. The boys chased and caught her. She bared her teeth and tore at them with her nails, but they tied her

with ropes through holes in her ears: two brothers held her on each side, two dragged her along, two held a rope round her waist.

They got her home and married her to the eldest brother, but what was he to do? The youngest thought, 'If we burn the tiger-skin and cut her nails she won't run away.' They burnt the skin and cut her nails and prepared for the marriage. Then the girl said, 'Bring me cloth like the skin you burnt and I'll marry you; otherwise I'll die.'

The twelve brothers thought, 'If she dies, we won't get another woman.' So they went to find a cloth. There was nothing like a tiger-skin, but Beng Rani was making *kereng*-bark cloth [1] and they begged for some of it. The Rani refused till they offered her the youngest brother in exchange. They clothed the girl and she married the eldest brother and bore him children. When she was dying she said, 'Let all Gadabas wear this cloth or their race will collapse.'

5

KOND

Goludokki, Koraput District

Formerly all men lived naked. There were two Doms, Sonamolo and Raimolo. Bura Pinnu gave them cotton seeds, saying, 'Sow these seeds in your garden.' They sowed the seeds and in the rains they sprouted. In the cold weather, Bura Pinnu came and spun thread in front of the two Doms and told them to make cloth. But they said, 'How should we know the way to make cloth?' Bura Pinnu made a loom and showed them how to use it. They started weaving and when they had enough, they took the cloth to sell to the Konds.

For eight annas they sold a cloth of seven cubits: for four annas a cloth of five cubits. The cloth used by the Kond women cost two annas for two cubits. Gradually then everybody learnt to wear clothes.

[1] The bark-cloth worn by Gadaba women is called *bagh-bana*, 'striped like a tiger'. The rope passed through the lobes of the girl's ears has reference to the enormous brass ear-rings worn by the women.

6

KOND

Charcharganna, Koraput District

The Konds lived naked in Saphaganna for twelve years. Then Nirantali said, 'Wear *kejang* leaves.' They wore them for seven days; then put on belts made of *dhaman* bark. They wore this for six months. But the bark hurt them, they got sores on their bodies.

So Nirantali went to a Dom called Salika and took him to her home. Near her house was a cotton tree. She showed him how to get thread from this tree and make cloth—for men twelve hands long and one broad; for women three hands long and one-and-a-half broad. He made borders of blue and yellow.

When it was ready he took it to Saphaganna and sold it to the Konds, a man's cloth for one rupee and a woman's for four annas.

7

KUTTIA KOND

Surangbaro, Ganjam District

In Karanja lived a Kuttia Kond named Mirngo-era and his wife. They lived quite naked and their children were naked. When the children grew, the father and mother felt ashamed. They went to Nirantali and said to her, 'We have many children. How can we be naked in their presence? They see our bodies and we see their's and are ashamed.'

Nirantali gave them cotton seeds and said, 'Sow these in your clearings in the forest. When they grow, pick the fruit and make thread from it.' This they did. They called a Dom and asked him to make cloth for them. But even then there was only enough to cover the hips and the rest of the body remained naked.

8

MURIA

Banuaguda, Koraput District

In the old days men did not wear turbans and women did not tie up their hair or dress it with oil. The result was that both men and women looked savage and dishevelled.

One day a certain Chief invited many visitors to the wedding of his son. The boys and girls assembled and danced. Hearing the noise, Bairam Deo and Hinglajin Mata[1] came to see what was going on, but they were not pleased with the dancing, for the boys and girls were slovenly as ghosts.

Bairam Deo removed his clothes and tore them into strips to make turbans for the boys and Hinglajin Mata took her golden comb and did the girls' hair with oil from a silver vessel. Then she tore her cloth into strips and showed the girls how to tie the hair back and wind the cloth round the bun. Now the boys and girls looked charming and Bairam Deo and Hinglajin were delighted with their dancing. 'Always get yourselves up carefully like this,' they said.

9

SAORA

Pastamura, Sambalpur District

In Bhuigarh lived Pochu, the Ganda. This Pochu had two wives. He had been watchman of the village for many years. One day he went to his father-in-law's house. In those days men did not wear cloth, but bark and leaves. On his way Pochu reached Mainagir Hill and found many cotton trees there. Near by lived Kuber Deota: he asked Pochu where he was going.

[1] Hinglaj is actually the name of a sacred mountain in Sind, on which stands a famous temple visited mainly by low-caste Hindus, though the Mata's officiant is a Muslim. A god called Hinglaj is worshipped by the Teliraja beggars of Bombay. Hinglajin Mata occurs in Gond and Baiga stories: excited by her youth and beauty Murra Deo seduces her; she is invoked in Baiga mantras; she initiated the custom of sowing the *jawaras* (baskets of grain in temporary shrines for the fertility of the crops).—Enthoven, p. 88; Elwin, *The Baiga*, pp. 363, 378.

'Don't go there,' he said, 'but stay, pick cotton pods and take them home to make cloth.' 'But I don't know how,' said Pochu. Kuber Deota showed him how to pick the pods and went home with him. He stayed six months and taught him to weave.

10

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

Long ago a girl went to work in a hill-clearing and her brother followed her. Both were naked. The boy desired to lie with the girl in the clearing, for when he saw her he was filled with love for her. A peacock cried, '*Meo-meo*'. The girl said, 'What creature is that crying?' The boy said, 'You don't understand. It is not crying. It is saying, "Catch hold of your sister".' The girl said, 'How can I lie with my brother?'

The boy took her by force. He went to it so strongly that the clitoris broke off and fell to the ground and the girl wept loudly. Sima Rani came from above to ask what the trouble was. The girl was too shy to say. But Sima Rani saw blood flowing from the place and at last the girl told her how her brother had broken the thing off.

Sima Rani thought, 'If this always happens, there will be great trouble for women.' So she planted the clitoris and it turned into a cotton seed and a shrub grew from it. Sima Rani told the people to collect the cotton, make thread and give it to the Doms who would weave it into cloth.

Ornaments

11

BHUNJIA

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

One day long ago, Bhagavan said to Mahadeo and Parvati, 'Go to the world and see how it has been made and whether anything is lacking.' Mahadeo said, 'How are we to get there?' Bhagavan said to the spider, 'Throw your thread down to the

world and let them slide down it.' The spider threw its thread down to the world and Mahadeo and Parvati slid down to the earth and far below the surface.

There they saw the two brothers Katanan and Hatanan holding the earth up in their hands. They saw the great fish Dadwa coiled round the earth. They saw Kekra Pande, the learned crab, holding the earth with its two claws. They went on and saw Nag Deo supporting the world on its head.

When Mahadeo and Parvati approached it, Nag Deo fell at Mahadeo's feet and wrapped itself round them. Mahadeo said, 'Look, what is this wrapped round my feet?' Parvati touched the snake with her hand and Nag Deo at once coiled round her arm and neck. Parvati screamed in terror, but Mahadeo said, 'This creature shall be your ornament. You shall wear it round your neck and round your wrists, for beauty and adornment.'

This is how women began to wear ornaments.

12

KOYA

Sikpalli, Koraput District

There was a great mountain—Saimari—and at its foot was a river. On the hillside lived a Koya and his wife: they had one daughter. When they went to their fields, they used to leave the daughter in the house to clean it and to cook their dinner. Now in this girl's hair were very large lice. While her parents were away, she used to catch them, cut their throats with a knife and throw them into a pit.

One day the Koya caught a wild cat in the jungle and brought it home. The girl kept it as a pet; she loved it and the cat loved her. Every day the cat used to watch her catching lice. One day the girl's mother saw the knife her daughter used to cut the lice. There was some blood on it and a few drops had fallen on the ground in front of the house. The mother thought, 'While we are away working, my daughter and this cat catch birds and squirrels and feast together.' She abused the girl and asked the cat, 'What have you been doing?' The cat told her about the lice.

The mother did not believe it, so next day instead of going to the fields, she hid to watch. She saw the girl and the cat, after eating, go to sit in front of the house. They began catching lice. The mother was angry and picked up a pestle and hit the girl three times on the head. All the big lice fell out and ran away and turned into rats. Then the mother said, 'Wherever have you been throwing these lice?' The girl took her to the place. The flesh of the lice had rotted, and only the bones remained. The skulls had turned into cowrie-shells.

Just as once people had lice in their hair, so now they wear cowries.

13

HILL SAORA

Thodrangu, Koraput District

At first the Saoras did not wear any ornaments and their bare bodies looked ugly and unattractive. One day Kittung went to look for honey in the forest and in his search came to a marking-nut tree. He picked up some of the fruit and took it home to his wife. He went somewhere then, and his wife busied herself making a necklace with the fruit, stringing it on a cord of wild bean-vine. She made a long necklace which she hung round her neck and some short ones which she tied round her wrists and ankles.

When Kittung came home, he found his wife looking very beautiful in her new finery and he said to her, 'If everybody wears ornaments like this, how nice they will look.'

He sent for Ganga, the brass-smith, and took him to Reribaru Hill, where he dug up a lot of gold, silver and brass and taught him how to fashion these metals into ornaments. Soon Ganga was making bangles and anklets, ear-rings and nose-rings until an entire cartload was ready.

When Ganga had brought all the ornaments home, the Kittung called the people together for a dance and dressed them in the new fashion. They were delighted and spent all day admiring one another. In this way the custom of wearing ornaments spread throughout the tribe.

14

HILL SAORA

Barasingi, Ganjam District

In the old days Saora women did not even think about wearing ornaments. In Luber village there lived a certain Komti, Arjun by name, who was very rich. The headman of the village was Dujju Saora. The Komti had a son and a daughter; the Saora had two daughters, the elder of whom was married. Both the Komti's children were unmarried. One day the Komti went to Patna[1] and bought some gold and silver ornaments for his daughter. The girl put them on and ran to Dujju's house. When Dujju's younger daughter saw them, she too wanted ornaments and went weeping to her father. Dujju tried to comfort her but she took no notice, so he said, 'Go to Kittung and weep before him; perhaps he will give you what you want. But don't bother me.'

The girl went to Kittung and wept before him and he too tried to comfort her. But she went on crying and at last in despair he killed a goat and took out the entrails and made them into a necklace; he chopped up the stomach into bits and made them into red beads; he roasted the liver and made the bits into black beads. Then he dressed the girl up in this strange finery and she was happy again.

After that the Karigars (craftsmen) began to make beads of baked earth and in this way the use of ornaments spread through the country.

Tattooing

15

GADABA

Onagelu, Koraput District

An old woman had a son. When he grew up, she arranged his marriage with a nice young girl in a neighbouring village.

[1] The local name for Parlakimedi.

In due course, the boy went to fetch his wife. As they were on their way home, they came to a quiet shaded stream, and the boy told his wife to lie down on the bank. Then he took out his thing and showed it to her. When she saw it, she was frightened out of her wits and she rushed from the place screaming, 'Save me, save me.'

Ispur Mahaprabhu's wife heard her cries and appeared before her on the path. The girl flung her arms round her, repeating, 'Save me, save me.' 'What's the matter?' asked the woman. The girl said, 'I am frightened of his thing; he will kill me with it.' Ispur's wife laughed and said, 'Come to my house and stay with me for a time.' The girl stayed in Ispur's house for a few days, and then Ispur's wife said, 'Now you must go home. Take something with you to remember me by.' She took thorns and tattooed the girl on the arms and legs. The girl gasped with the pain.

'There!' said Ispur Mahaprabhu's wife, 'You can bear that. You will gasp a little and it will hurt a little, but it won't be worse than that when he pricks you with his thorn.'

16

GOND

Chacharaguda, Koraput District

In the days when people did not get themselves tattooed, after their death Jam Deota could not tell whether they were male or female. He said, 'If only women had some sort of mark on their bodies, I could recognize them.' He made black stuff and iron needles and tattooed some marks on his own daughter-in-law's body. She looked very nice and when the pain was soothed Jam Deota sent his son and daughter-in-law to the world of men. He gave them a fiddle and said, 'Go and play this, singing from village to village. Show the women your marks and make the same marks on them.' They did as he commanded.

These marks are a woman's wealth: these are the only things she can take with her after death.

17

KOND

Borgaon, Ganjam District

Formerly, so long as they were in Saphaganna all the Konds were the same. Later they split up and separated. Pangias and Kuttias used to live together and looked alike.

One day Bura Pinnu and Pusuruli came to a Kond village and called the Pangias and Kuttias. Pusuruli told the girls to come to her and they sat round her. Pusuruli thought, 'These girls look all alike: how can anyone know them apart?'

She took dirt from her eye and ground some coal and mixed it with oil and got three needles from Kanutera, the blacksmith, and made marks on the Pangia girl's cheeks and said, 'Let every girl make marks like this and men will know them for Pangia Konds and Darni Pinnu will be pleased with them.'

18

PARENGA

Tetlipoda, Koraput District

There were twelve brothers and their wives. In the same village lived an old widow who had a daughter. One day the old woman was tattooing her daughter's body when the brothers and their wives came by and asked her what she was doing and why. The old woman said, 'When my daughter dies and goes to Ispur Mahaprabhu, he will ask her where she lived and how many husbands she had and how many children they gave her. When she tells him, he will ask her how it was she was able to endure the pain and trouble they caused her. Then he will shoot her with his arrow to test her. The tattoo marks will prevent the arrow piercing her and she will have no other wounds.' The brothers laughed at her and their wives abused her for telling such silly lies.

But in due course they died, and when they came to Ispur Mahaprabhu he spoke to them exactly as the old woman had said he would. The husbands had to stand before him and he shot at them with his arrows and they were wounded by them.

'I have wounded you,' he said to the men, 'because you never thought of the pain you were causing your women.'

He sent the wives back to the Middle World to get tattooed.

19

HILL SAORA

Liabo, Ganjam District

All people, men and women, lived naked at first and all men looked alike and equal. Kittung could not recognize one from another and spoke to a Pano as if he was speaking to a Brahmin, and to a Saora as if he was a Kond. Then after a long time Kittung gave clothes to the Oriyas and Paiks.

One day Kittung's wife called Duddu, daughter of Rujno Saora, and gave her cloth to wear round her waist, saying, 'Wear as much as this and let the rest of your body be naked.' The girl felt too shy to come into the presence of men. Kittung's wife wanted to make her feel better, so she mixed oil and coal and made marks on the girl's forehead and cheeks with a thorn and said, 'This is the clothing for the upper part of your body: there is no need for more.' So the girl was no longer shy, for she was dressed in her tattoo.[1]

[1] The Kamars give two reasons for being tattooed. The first is that if they find themselves destitute in the after-life they will at least be able to sell the ornaments tattooed on their bodies. The second is that the circular dotted lines tattooed round the knees will help them to climb to heaven.—Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. III, p. 329.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

AGRICULTURE AND ITS IMPLEMENTS

1

BINJHWAR

Padhanpalli, Sambalpur District

On Binjhiban Hill were five clumps of bamboo. From one of these a boy was born. He drank bamboo-milk and grew. Then from another bamboo clump a girl, Basin Kaniya [the Bamboo Maiden] was born. She drank bamboo-milk and grew. In time they lay together. They never saw other human beings and lived on wind and water.

One day Basin Kaniya's mother gave her a golden axe in a dream and said, 'With this cut my younger sister, bamboo, and make baskets and fans and sell them in the villages, and so make your living.' So these two cut bamboo and the boy made a fan and the girl a basket. When it was ready the mother said, 'Take these to Sumri Raja at Garhpohanda.' They went and on the way passed through a great jungle where under a rock lived Gurbal Deo. Gurbal Deo asked them, 'Where are you going?' 'To sell our wares.'

Gurbal Deo took a fan and a basket and said, 'Don't go back to the Binjhiban Hill, for your mother has gone away.' They took no notice and went back but found it as Gurbal Deo had said. They returned to Gurbal Deo and lived there. Gurbal Deo gave their caste the name of Mahar.

2

GADABA

Onumal, Koraput District

In the days before ploughing began, some villagers were celebrating a path-marriage between a young shamanin and her tutelary. At the time of the marriage, Bhimo Mahaprabhu came

to see the girl. He cut down a plum tree with his axe and made a plough. Then he made a yoke and laid it on the shoulders of two boys, and made them plough the earth all round the wedding-booth. He mixed every kind of grain together and sowed it. When he finished, the two boys turned into bullocks and ran away dragging the plough behind them.

Bhimo Mahaprabhu said to the people, 'Plough and sow as I have shown you, and you will get great profit.'

3

JHORIA

Sarsopodro, Koraput District

In Karjipadro lived an old man and woman. They had a young unmarried daughter called Rumti. This girl had a cock and hen and was very fond of them.

One day the parents went to another village to attend a marriage, and left the girl alone with her fowls. There was a lot of grain to be cleaned. The girl put it in her cloth and shook it to remove the dirt. When the cock and hen saw what she was doing they discussed together how to help her. They cut off their ears and gave them to the girl and showed her how to clean the grain with them. They used three ears for fans and put one aside. 'When the three are broken, take the one remaining to the Matia and ask him to make a fan like it out of bamboo.' In the end, when the three ears broke she did this.

Since then men have used bamboo fans to clean their grain.

4

JHORIA

Parjamunda, Koraput District

There were two brothers; one was priest and the other Chief of their village. There was a great forest in those days, and everyone got fruit and roots. But as the people cut and burnt the forest, there came a time when all the trees were gone, and the people went in fear to Ispur Mahaprabhu and saluted him. He appeared in the form of an old man and said, 'Why have you called me?'

The priest and Chief said, 'All the trees are destroyed. How are we to feed our children, for we have nothing to dig with?' Ispur replied, 'Go to the blacksmiths. They will make you implements of iron.' And he went away.

The priest and the Chief went to the blacksmith and asked him for implements. But he replied, 'I am too old; I can't make anything now. But I have a son. He might get you iron, but he is all alone. But if you give him your daughter and a cow, he'll be able to do it.'

The priest and Chief, the two brothers, brought one of their daughters and a cow to the blacksmith's son. He took the cow to the hill called Onjur and sacrificed it, and made bellows of the hide. He dug ore from the hill and smelted it: the girl worked the bellows. Then he made an axe and a digging-stick and gave them to the people.

5

KONDA DORA

Jangroda, Koraput District

Bursi, the carpenter of Barwaguda, had no children. In those days men worked with hoes. One day Bursi went with his tools to Merichul Hill and cut a cotton tree and prepared a plough and brought it back. Next day he ploughed with it in the field called Reymaranbera. People ran to watch and asked him how he got it. 'I made it myself,' he said. The villagers said, 'We'll work for you, but make us ploughs also.' Bursi went back to the hill. He stayed there for twenty-one days and made many ploughs. He called the neighbours and gave one to each household.

6

KUTTIA KOND

Pringeli, Ganjam District

After men were born and their number increased, Nirantali divided them into different castes and showed each what work to do. She told the Paiks to cultivate fields and considered how

to make ploughs for them. She called a blacksmith from Bindrabari and said to him, 'Make a chisel and adze and bring them to me.' He made a chisel and adze and gave them to her.

Nirantali went to the jungle and cut a *sarai* tree and made a plough with it. For the yoke she used *bāndo* wood. When it was ready she gave it to Manjhi Gond and he began to cultivate. Others saw him and they too learnt how to make ploughs.

7

KUTTIA KOND

Kumrabali, Ganjam District

Nirantali used to husk grain with her hands. So in fact did everyone. It took a long time and was very tiresome. Nirantali went to Libru, the blacksmith, and got him to make an axe. She went to Golapar Hill and cut a *sarai* tree; she brought it home and removed a piece two hands long. She cut, from a *bāndo* tree, a piece three-and-a-half hands long. She began to work on a Friday and in five days had a pestle ready, three hands long, three fingers broad. From Libru she got an iron ferrule and put it on. On the sixth day she dug a mortar in her house and husked five measures of rice and two measures of millet. The Konds, seeing this, learnt to do the same.

8

KOND

Koklanga, Ganjam District

Before grain was made, what need was there of fans? But when there were fields and crops, men found it difficult to clean the grain. At first they used to use *sāl* leaves as fans. Bura Pinnu thought, 'This is very tiresome,' and told Gudara Kond to make a fan out of bamboo. Gudara made twenty-one fans first and took them to Saphaganna. Bura Pinnu called men there and gave them one each.

9

KOND

Koklanga, Ganjam District

Bura Pinnu gave the Konds their hill-clearings and told them to cultivate. He gave the Oriyas and Paiks regular fields and told them to make ploughs. He gave the Konds axes to cut their clearings, and sickles and hoes to scrape the earth over their seeds. He took Arjun Naik, who was a Paik by caste, to Tikawali Hill. There he got Mukutera, the blacksmith, to make a chisel and file and saw. He showed Arjun Naik how to make a plough with *sāl* wood and the yoke with *dhāman*. After that the Oriyas and Paiks began to use ploughs. Arjun Naik was the first carpenter and people paid him in grain.

10

KUTTIA KOND

Birighati, Ganjam District

Nirantali gave grain to men but there were no fans to clean it. Men used to sift it by tossing it up and down in their hands. Nirantali wanted to make fans, but had no idea how to do so. At last she called Kanra Bhimraj from Kanragada and asked him to help. He took his axe and went to Saphe Hill, cut a bamboo, the kind that first shoots up in the rains, cut it into four pieces and wove it into a fan and gave it to Nirantali. Nirantali was pleased and put grain in it and cleaned it. Nirantali told Kanra always to do this work and make his living by selling the fans.

11

SAORA

Nangmunda, Sambalpur District

Balram Raja of Bankagarh was a Binjhwar. He had two wives. The elder wife's mother and father lived in the sky: the father was Raja Sujawal. Balram Raja sent this wife home to her parents. But he kept the younger wife with him, and

they went to live at Lamphagarh. The elder wife had a son and the younger had a daughter.

Balram Raja and the younger wife both grew old and their daughter grew up and became mature. She passed her first menses; two years went by, yet no man came for her. So Balram Raja himself went to find her a husband. In the end he found a poor orphan boy and married her to him.

The elder wife's son married Amil Sai, his mother's brother's daughter. Now both children were married, but the father was anxious how to feed them. There were no ploughs then: men dug with sticks and hoes. The Raja thought, 'When I die there'll be great trouble for my children. I must do something to help them plough their fields.'

He went to Harmoli Hill, cut a *harra* tree and made two ploughs. He gave one to his son-in-law and told him to use it after his death. He took the other to his son in the sky. When he saw it Raja Sujawal made a golden plough. But he could not use it and it is still in the sky, shining as a row of stars.

12

SAORA

Lanjipada, Ganjam District

One day Gorju Basor was going from Mandaran to his wife's house at Pandrangarh. As he went, night fell and he lay down to sleep in the jungle below a clump of bamboos. The bamboos whispered to each other, 'This Basor is going to cut us and he will make us into winnowing-fans and sell us.' The Basor heard what they said, but he did nothing then and went on to his wife's house. But on his way home, he cut the bamboos. He made them into winnowing-fans and took them to Narlum Saora of Bakroligarh to sell.

When the Saora women saw the fans they begged him to make more, and so their use spread through the world.

13

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

In the old days the Saoras only had the long-bladed hoe. It was not enough and they were always hungry. So Sima Rani said to the bullock, 'Go and tell the Saoras not to rely on hoes, but to make ploughs and to yoke two women to each and let a man drive them. Let them work twice and eat once.' For in those days men ate three or four times a day.

The bullock set out, but on the way a partridge flew up and frightened it so much that it forgot its message and said, 'In the hot days work once: in the cold days twice; in the rains once; but always eat thrice.' It went back to Sima Rani and she asked what it had said. When she heard, she was angry and said, 'Now you yourself will have to pull the ploughs instead of women.'

14

HILL SAORA

Tumulu, Ganjam District

At first people used the shafts of peacocks' tails to break up the ground, sticking rats' teeth in the ends. They made goads of porcupine quills and used parrots to pull their ploughs. They sowed nothing but millet. But they did not get very good crops.

They went on like this for a long time until Kittung decided to improve things. He cut some *bandrung* wood and made a plough and took it home. He got the blacksmith to make a ploughshare. Then he taught men to plough. The first to use it was Korsa Saora.

15

HILL SAORA

Taraba, Ganjam District

Ramma and Bimma, the two brothers, lived on the Old Mountain. They used to go out together to cut the forest and sow their seed in the clearings. They grew very weary of their digging-sticks, and one day Bimma went to Galbesum on the Kokli Hill and said, 'Digging, digging with our hands, we grow weary; show us some other way to break the earth.'

Galbesum[1] had nothing, so he cut off his left leg and gave it to Bimma. 'Go and break the earth with this: afterwards you may make a plough of wood of the same shape. Bimma put the leg over his shoulder and went home. He made a plougn of *pissaro* wood and gave it to Ramma. Ramma began to plough and when other men saw it they too made ploughs and worked their fields.

16

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

An old man and woman had five sons and two daughters. They made a clearing on the hillside and sowed their grain, but ants and birds stole the seed. Again and again they sowed, but every time the ants and birds stole the seed. The old man was in despair, for how was he to feed his children? He went to the jungle with a rope and, climbing a banyan, prepared to hang himself.

At that very moment Kittung and his wife came by. Kittung looked up and saw the old man standing on a branch with the rope round his neck. The wife said to Kittung, 'Whatever's the matter with that old man?' Kittung begged him to come down and tell him his trouble.

[1] Galbesum is a Saora god, often identified with Jaliasum, and Jaliasum's emblem, the peacock. If neglected he gives the cattle foot-and-mouth disease, but this appears to be his only connexion—apart from this story—with agriculture.

When he heard the story, Kittung dug up a bamboo root and made it into a hoe. He said to the old man, 'After sowing your seed, dig up the earth a little to cover it, and then the birds won't be able to get at it.' In this way the use of hoes began.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

HUNTING AND FISHING

1

BHATTRA

Kirki, Koraput District

At first men did not know how to fish or hunt. One day Sona Manjhi went at midday to bathe in Mundajhori stream. That day Jalkamni was catching fish, and when Sona Manjhi saw her, he said, 'What are you doing?' She answered, 'Catching fish. Don't you know what that is?' Sona Manjhi said, 'I know nothing.' Jalkamni said, 'I'll teach you.' She put one foot in the stream to block it, then splashed out the water and caught the fish struggling in the mud. Jalkamni then took Sona Manjhi to the jungle and tore half her cloth and made a trap, stretching it between two trees, and they drove animals into it. A barking-deer ran into the trap and they killed it. Jalkamni gave the fish and deer to Sona Manjhi and told him to make traps of cord.

2

BONDO

Bodapada, Koraput District

The first of all the Bondos was Soma Bodnaik. He had two wives, Sombari and Sukri. From each wife he had one son and he named them Sonia and Lachmi. When they grew to boyhood and were wandering about with nothing to do, Mahaprabhu said to Soma Bodnaik, 'Make these children something to play with.' Soma had no idea what to make, so Mahaprabhu brought wood from the forest and made a bow. He tied it round with fibre of the sago palm and made a string of bamboo. He split bits of bamboo to make arrows and went to the blacksmith for arrow-heads. When it was ready he gave the toy to Soma's sons to play with.

In front of Soma's house there was a *bija* tree; Mahaprabhu

told the boys to shoot at it. The boys took aim and hit it. Then Mahaprabhu told them to aim at a black stone a little further off and they hit that too. Mahaprabhu was very pleased with them and told them that in this way they would be able to get all they wanted to eat by shooting animals.

3

GOND

Banuaguda, Koraput District

Jotsai Raja lived in Kumragarh. His Rani's name was Chipkeli. He had three daughters. They were grown up but not married, for the Rani said, 'When they are forty years old they can marry, but not before. If they go to men before marriage, I will leave them in the jungle without food or water.' The girls were afraid of their father, and were careful to have nothing to do with boys.

In due time the eldest girl had her period. On the day she washed her head, as she returned from bathing, she met a boy of the Haddi caste. His shadow fell on her body and she conceived. After seven months the Raja heard of it and was very angry. He told his chaprasis to tie the girl to a tree in the jungle where a tiger could get her. The chaprasis took her without food or water to a great forest. On the bank of the Indravati River was a *kanha* tree; they tied her to it by her hands and feet and left her alone. She remained there living on air; she could do nothing.

After some days, the poor girl gave birth to two sons and a daughter. But she could do nothing for them; she could not even give them milk, so the children also had to live on air. When they grew big enough, they untied their mother but she was too weak to walk and crawled to the bank of the Indravati and rested there.

There came floating down the stream the broken cords of an old cot in which some fish were caught. The eldest boy jumped into the water, pulled out the bundle of cords and removed the fish. He made a fire and roasted the fish and they ate them. After that they wanted to eat fish every day. The

boy made a net of strips of bark like the web of a cot and tied shells round the web to make it heavy. He threw it in the water and caught a lot of fish.

This is how the custom of catching fish began.

4

KONDA DORA

Tarpadro, Koraput District

A Denai fisherman and his wife lived in Rasguda. They had no children. Many days passed; they grew very poor and when at last they were starving, they left the village and went elsewhere in search of food. On their way, they met Mahaprabhu. They were worn and thin with hunger and could hardly walk. Mahaprabhu asked, 'Where are you going?' They fell at his feet and said, 'We are dying of hunger.' Mahaprabhu took off his cloth and gave it to them. He cut off his own big toe and gave it to them saying, 'Go to Sarwan Lake and throw this toe in and next day cast this cloth into the water and slowly pull it to the bank. Whatever you find in the cloth, take to the village and sell it and buy what you need for food with the money you get.'

The fishermen did as Mahaprabhu said and the toe turned into fish and the cloth became a net. They caught many fish and took them to the bazaar. But the people said, 'What are these?' They themselves did not know and went to Mahaprabhu and he told them, 'These are fish and will be your means of livelihood.'

5

KOYA

Chirpalli, Koraput District

Before men knew how to cultivate, they lived on fruits and roots. There was neither Sun nor Moon in those days. Pandu made the first field, but no one could till it. There was an embankment called Warsel, where he sowed rice. At the time of reaping, his family assembled to help. That very day the Sun and Moon came up into the sky. The people threw away their

tools and implements and hid under rocks. They dared not come out into the open; they hid in caves.

Sukra Koya was hunting in the forest. He came to the Warsel field and saw the ears of rice, and ploughs and yokes thrown about. He picked some grain and took a plough to his house and copied it. He sowed the seed he had taken.

After that men everywhere began to plough and sow.

6

KOND

Kapilpada, Kalahandi District

Nirantali had a son called Beta Pinnu. When he grew up he said, 'Mother, I want to go hunting.' Nirantali said, 'You have no bow or arrow: how can you hunt?' Beta Pinnu said, 'Get me a bow and arrow quickly and I'll go.' Nirantali said, 'My son wants to go hunting. Make him an iron bow and arrows.' The blacksmith quickly made them and she gave them to Beta Pinnu and told him to go hunting, but he killed men instead of animals. When he had killed many people, their relatives complained to his mother.

Nirantali called Beta Pinnu and told him not to do this. 'I gave you a bow and arrow to kill wild animals, not human beings.' It was after this that men began to hunt.

7

KUTTIA KOND

Bandika, Ganjam District

A man and his wife lived in a certain village with his two sons, one of whom was married. They also had with them an old grandmother.

One day they were all very hungry and the man and his wife with his married son and his wife went to find mushrooms. In the heart of the forest they found a mushroom growing from the head of a great snake. They tried to pick it, but the snake swallowed all four of them. Then it went away to a river and stayed there for eight days.

The next day the villagers went to hunt, taking the unmarried brother with them. He killed a sambhar. The other hunters said, 'Who killed it?' Another man falsely said, 'I killed it. The boy did not contradict him and the people carried the carcass home, cut it up and divided the meat. They did not give the boy anything. Seven days later they made a model of the sambhar out of clay, and a clay chicken, and they carried the clay sambhar on the same pole with which they had carried the real one down to the river. They offered rice before the clay sambhar and made a fowl out of rice-flour and sacrificed it. Then they said, 'Let us go hunting again.'

The boy said to his grandmother, 'Let me go hunting today.' She said, 'Don't go, for you killed the sambhar and they did not give you any share of it. There is plenty of grain in our clearing. Let us go and thrash it.' They started for the clearing and the boy went ahead and when he reached the place he found that the baskets in which the grain was stored had turned into brass pots, the pestle had turned into a gun and the grain itself had become a mare. When he saw this the boy was very frightened and began to run away. But the mare said to him, 'Don't be afraid. I have found your parents and your brother and his wife, and if you will come with me I will show you where they are.' The boy picked up the gun and, without saying anything to his grandmother, mounted the mare and rode away. As he went, he suddenly found that he was dressed in a shirt and trousers and a good coat.

There was a Raja. He was coming along the road with his daughter. When he saw the boy in his fine clothes, he said to the girl, 'Why don't you marry this boy?' The boy said, 'How can I marry a Raja's daughter? For I am only a poor Kond.' The Raja said, 'You look like a Raja. Why should you call yourself a Kond? Certainly you may marry my daughter.' At that the boy agreed and they were married. The boy gave the mare to the Raja and the Raja gave his horse and the girl's horse to the boy. Then the mare said to the boy, 'Your parents and your brother and his wife are in the belly of a snake down in the river. Kill the snake and cut the belly open with one of your arrows.'

The boy rode on one horse and his bride on the other and they went down to the river. The boy said to his wife, 'When I have rescued them there will be six of us; so cook three seers of rice.' The girl went aside and made a fire and began to cook. The boy saw the snake and shot at it with his gun, but he missed. He had a damaged arrow with him and he fired it at the snake and killed it. Then he cut the belly open and his parents and his brother and his wife came out. They were just alive and the boy laid them down on the ground in the sun. When they had recovered a little, he said to them, 'Who am I? Don't you recognize me?' The mother said, 'You are some officer or Raja. How can we recognize you?' The boy said, 'No, I am your own son,' and he told them the whole story. Then they got up and ate the food which was now ready.

After that they went home, but the old grandmother was so frightened when she saw them that she hid in a clump of bamboos.

8

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

Long ago Kittung sent two brothers out to hunt. He said, 'Bring me anything you can find, animals, flies, ants, anything.' But they found nothing and after a bit they got very tired. They came to an open space in the forest and sat down to rest, some distance from each other. A fly settled on the elder brother's chest: he was too lazy to brush it off, so he whistled to his brother, who shot an arrow at it. The fly flew away, but the arrow pierced the brother's chest and killed him. The younger brother went to Kittung and told him what had happened. Kittung abused him and said, 'That's not the way to hunt,' and took him to the jungle and taught him how to drive game.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

RECREATION, DANCE AND SONG

I

GOND

Chindiguda, Koraput District

There was a merchant who had seven sons. Six of them worked; the youngest only played: his name was Dinda Nakul. He used to play in his swing all day. The other brothers were angry and plotted to kill him. One day when they went to their fields to plough, they asked him to bring their gruel. The boy put the gruel in hens' egg-shells and the water in sparrows' egg-shells and the vegetable in wood-pigeons' egg-shells. When the brothers saw this, they were angry, but they came to the boundary of the field for such food as there was. They told the boy to go and plough while they ate. He took the first plough and the other ploughs followed of their own accord. When the brothers saw what was happening, they abused the boy. They buried him alive under great clods of earth.

In the evening when the brothers went home, their wives asked where Dinda Nakul was. They said, 'He gave us gruel and went home: we don't know where he is.'

That night the six wives went to find the boy. They dug up the field and got him out and revived him. Then they took him home.

The brothers thought, 'Our wives have saved him: let's take him where they won't find him.' There was a Witches' Mountain where many witches lived. No man dared go there: if he did the witches killed and ate him. But the six brothers went there and made a field; they sowed rice, and when it grew, they made a little platform of thin wood two feet high. They told the boy, 'We've made a field for you, but wild pigs come there so you had better go and watch on the platform.' The boy took his food and his fiddle, but when he saw the little platform, he was frightened. He said to Mahaprabhu, 'Let this be twelve cubits

high.' It grew twelve cubits high and he climbed up to the top. There he lit a fire, ate his supper, spread his bedding and sat playing his fiddle. As he played, the witches heard the music and the twenty-one sisters ran to the field. They tried to climb up to the platform, but could not and fell down on the ground. They cried, 'Who are you?' The boy said, 'I'm Dinda Nakul.' The witches said, 'But you are our brother; why are you afraid of us? Play well and we'll dance.' He said, 'I'll play, but you must teach me some songs.' The twenty-one witches sang and taught him: he played and they danced round and round below. This they did for seven nights and in this way Dinda Nakul learnt every kind of song.

After that he taught the girls and boys of his village to sing and dance at the Pus Parab and Chait Parab festivals.

2

KAMAR

Patarpunji (Khariar), Kalahandi District

Father Mahadeo went to the Kajliban [1] forest to make drums. He got so busy and excited making every kind of drum that he never gave a thought to Mother Parvati; his entire mind was fixed on his work. But Parvati made a tiger with dirt rubbed from her body and sent it to frighten Mahadeo home.

When he saw the tiger, Mahadeo threw his drums into a river and went home to Parvati. The drums floated down the stream and gradually drifted to the bank and were caught in the grass and reeds. People found them and in this way their use spread through the land.

[1] Kajliban is the name given to any dense forest, black as *kajal,* the lampblack with which women beautify their eyes. It is identified by Grierson with the Land of Darkness of the legend of Alexander the Great. It frequently occurs in the stories and songs of middle India. When Alha and Indal left Mahoba, they took refuge in the Kajliban. Here Kariya Kuar made the first smithy and found fire among the dry bamboos as they rubbed together. Here Vasistha Muni sat in meditation, and Nanga Baiga and his wife were born from his urine. The gourd, in which grain and animals were preserved from the flood, settled here. It is the Land of Elephants, the home of the Shining Goat, the source of the black oil of invisibility.—Waterfield, p. 273; Elwin, *The Agaria,* p. 116; Elwin, *The Baiga,* pp. 312, 316, 395; Elwin, *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal,* pp. 4, 334, 350.

3

KUTTIA KOND

Charcharganna, Ganjam District

In Saphaganna, Paramugatti lived surrounded by many Konds. When they offered their sacrifices, the gods were not pleased and did not cure their diseases. Paramugatti was worried about this, but at last thought of a method of pleasing them. He got a bamboo and made a flute. Then he cut a sago-palm and made a drum of part of the trunk, stretching cowhide over it. He cut a banyan tree to make a tambourine and used goatskin for its face. He went to Binjhibari, the blacksmith, and got him to make an iron drum, paying him two rupees for it. For this he used cowhide. He sent Saleka Dom to get some brass drumsticks from a shop at Rangaband: he got a pair for two annas.

Now when they sacrificed to Tara Pinnu and Soru Pinnu the Konds drank and danced and beat their drums. Everyone was happy and the gods too were pleased.

4

MURIA

Siunaguda, Koraput District

Long ago Chalika Raja reigned in Barathgarh. After some time he moved to Orongel. He had one son. He arranged his marriage. But he thought, 'How can we enjoy this ceremony without dance and song?' He called his potters and said, 'Make drums out of earth.' He called Kuslu the carpenter and said, 'Make drums with *bija* wood.' He called the brass-smith and said, 'Make brass trumpets.' They set to work and, when the instruments were ready, brought them to the Raja. He called Gangadhar the Ghasia and said, 'Cover the drums with cowhide.' The Ghasia did so. Then the Raja called Chingu the Ganda and told him to play the trumpet and he told the Bhattras and Paiks to beat the drums.

Now the instruments were ready, but there were no dancers. The Raja called dancers from the Upper World and the wedding began. There was a great display and people came

from far. Since then instruments of music have been made and used.

5

HILL SAORA

Sogeda, Koraput District

In the old days there were no drums or flutes. Galdu Saora lived in Karbisahi with his two wives and three sons. After his death when his widows and sons examined the ashes from his pyre they could not find a single bone.

That night Galdu came in a dream to his younger widow and said, 'If you want to bring me home, send word to the neighbouring villages. When I hear the sound of flutes and drums and trumpets, I will give my bones and you can bring them home.' The woman said, 'But we have no such things. Show us how to make them, and we will certainly bring you home with honour.' So Galdu said in the dream, 'Make a flute and drums and trumpets in such and such a way, and come with them to fetch me.'

The girl got up that very night and found a potter to make the bowl of the earthen drum and she made the other things with her own hands. In the morning she called the people from all the places round and they took the drums and flutes and danced. Now when they reached the burning-ground and looked at the ashes they soon found the bones and brought them to the house and buried them near by.

In this way dancing and instruments of music came to the world.

6

HILL SAORA

Samgaita, Ganjam District

At the beginning men had no instruments of music. When anyone died or was married there was no means of sending the news to other villages. Kittung considered how to remedy this. 'I will make music so that all men may know when there is a

funeral or a wedding. It will cheer them up a little. It will be a good thing.' Kittung made a wooden drum and covered it with cowhide. With clay he made another drum and covered it with cowhide. With a brass dish he made a gong. When all was ready he called Ramma and told him to take the instruments and whenever he sacrificed or someone died, or married, he should drink, dance and make a noise. Ramma took the instruments and when he next sacrificed he called the Saoras of four or five villages and gave them liquor and made the boys and girls dance. The gods were pleased, and this good custom spread to every village.

7

HILL SAORA

Gunduruba, Koraput District

Mangu Saora lived in Ternagorjang. He was very wealthy. One day he went to Laising to his elder sister and asked for her daughter in marriage to his son. They were ready to give and she to come. But when Mangu asked his brother-in-law to fix the date of the marriage, the only answer he got was, 'When you come dancing to fetch her, I'll give her to you.'

Mangu went home wondering what to do, for there were no dances in those days. He went to Kittung and the god taught him to dance. When he knew what to do, Mangu went to his brother and said, 'Ask for any dance you will and we will do it.' The brother did not know anything about dances, so he said, 'Do whatever you like.' On the wedding day they went dancing for the girl and dancing they brought her: all day they drank and danced. When they had finished, Kittung gave names to the different dances: he called the marriage dance—Sindrung, the dance at the great sacrifice—Guar, the dance at the New Eating Festival—Abduran. From this beginning dances spread throughout the world.

8

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

Kittung is in the sky. He had a daughter, but she died. He buried her and after three years prepared to perform her Karja ceremonies. Her ghost said, 'Father, have a great dance for me, call all the neighbours, buy buffaloes and have a splendid feast.' Kittung arranged it and he himself danced like a peacock[1] and the guests imitated him.

It was in this way that dancing began.

9

HILL SAORA

Boramsingi, Koraput District

The daughter of Ramma Kittung and his wife Sitaboi was called Mourboi. She was very beautiful: her breasts were bael-fruit and the bun of her hair a bulbul's nest. Gods and men desired to marry her and there were endless quarrels over her.

This made the girl wretched. 'With all this bother about me,' she thought, 'I don't see how I am going to marry anyone. For if I marry any one, many will be killed through jealousy and rage.' So she hanged herself from a mango tree and died.

Men and gods carried her to the pyre and burnt her. The next day they buried her ashes and bones. In due time, they performed the Guar ceremony and offered palm-wine at the burning-place. There they found an *abba* tree flowering in the very spot where the bones had been buried. The gods went away, but the men plucked the flowers and took them home and ate them. That night the tree took the form of the girl and said, 'Dry me in the sun; then put me in a pot, and light a fire,' and so described the whole business of distillation. The people did

[1] An important part of the Karja ceremony which occurs every two years for all who have died during this period, is the peacock hunt. If a bird is killed, it is stuffed with straw and carried on a pole during the dances which accompany the rite.

as the girl told them, and when they had learnt to drink they learnt also to dance and sing.

The Kittungs, the dead and the gods came to watch the dances, but they were not pleased. Men, they thought, were enjoying themselves too much and were not giving them their due share. So they attacked one with fever, another with smallpox, a third with cholera, and did not stop their torment until men offered them *abba* spirit in sacrifice.

APPENDIXES

GLOSSARY OF NAMES

ARJUNA—The third of the Pandu princes. He appears but rarely in tribal stories.

ASUR—A demon; the word is commonly used in the later Hindu literature for any enemy of the gods. It is given by the tribesmen to monstrous supernatural beings who may, however, be tamed and become friendly to man.

BALIJATRA—'Sand Feast', so-called because the villagers plant grain in wet sand and grow it in little shrines. It is combined in Orissa with the First Fruits of the rice harvest and is celebrated with dancing, feasting and ceremonial swinging.

BARA DEO—Bara Deo, or Bara Pen, is the 'Great God' of the Gonds, now often modernized to Mahadeo.

BELA PINNU—The Kond Earth God or Goddess.

BASMOTI—The same as Basuki Mata or Basu Mata, one of the many titles of the Earth Goddess.

BASOR—A caste of workers in bamboo.

BHAGAVAN—A name deriving from the Rigvedic *bhaga,* giver of gifts, and now widely used both by Hindus and tribesmen for the Supreme Being.

BIMMA, BHIMA, BHIMO, BHIMSEN—Other variants are Bimai and Bimol. The Saoras pronounce the name Bimma. Bhima was the second of the five Pandu princes and is described as of great size, violent temper and enormous strength; he is called Vrikodra, or 'wolf's belly' on account of his tremendous appetite. A Falstaff among the gods, he has captured the imagination of the tribesmen as few of the traditional heroes of Hindu mythology have done. As son of Vayu, god of the wind, he has been made into a rain-god.

BHUNJIA—A small tribe living in the Khariar and Bindranawagarh Zamindaries.

BIJLI KANIYA—The 'Lightning Maiden', a popular figure in the mythology of Middle India, see MMI, pp. 92 ff.

BRAHMIN—The highest caste of Hindu society, held in some respect, though sometimes derided, by the tribesmen.

CHAIT PARAB—A great festival, characterized by dancing, feasting and a ceremonial hunt, observed by many tribes and lasting throughout the month of Chait (April).

CHANDAL—The word Chandal carries every association of horror

and disgust. The Chandals were an 'outcast and helot' people of the old world. Manu calls them 'the lowest of mankind'. In the *Ramayana* they are described as ill-formed and terrible of aspect. In the *Mahabharata*, they appear as hired assassins. (Risley, Vol. I, p. 183).

DAITYA—In the Hindu literature, an enemy of the gods, an ogre, and used here in the same sense.

DANG—An ogre.

DAILAMMASUM—Probably from Sanskrit *dharma*. The word *daramma* is used in Saora to denote pity, charity and justice, and the god Darammasum is held to be endowed with these qualities. He is often identified with Uyungsum, the Sun-god.

DASSARA—A royal festival, which in Jeypore (Koraput) was formerly associated with the Maharaja of Jeypore and held in honour of the goddess Kanaka Durga. It usually falls in October and lasts for sixteen days.

DENAI—A fisherman.

DEOTA—A word commonly used both for 'god' and 'goddess' by all the tribes except the Saoras and Konds. Its application is very wide, and it may be applied to the Supreme Being or to some local demon of a hill or stream.

DEUR—A name for the Creator or Supreme Being among the Koyas.

DHARMO—From Sanskrit *dharma*. The name of Dharmo Deota is given by many tribes to the Supreme Being, and usually implies some degree of moral goodness and beneficence.

DARNI PINNU—*Darni* in Kui means a cairn or shrine of three stones covered by a fourth, in which sacrifice is offered. Darni Deota is thus god of the shrine, and is generally identified with the Earth Goddess.

DHOBI—A dhobi is something more than a washerman: he has a certain ceremonial importance, derived from his duties of washing the clothes of women after childbirth, and the clothes of the dead.

DIWAN—A Prime Minister.

DOM—A Hindu caste, allied to the Panos and Gandas, of weavers and drummers. Doms often hold the post of watchman in tribal villages, and serve as money-lenders and advisers to the tribesmen.

DONGAR DAI—Goddess of the hill and forest.

GADEJANGBOI—A Saora deity, often imagined as female, whose name means 'life-giver'. Sometimes regarded as the Creator.

GANDA—Described by Russell and Hira Lal (Vol. III, p. 14) as a servile and impure caste of village drudges, acting as watchmen, weavers of coarse cloth and musicians.

GHASIA—A caste generally despised by the tribesmen. Ghasias—the name comes from *ghās,* or grass—are scavengers, syces and sometimes workers in brass. The tribesmen get their brass ornaments from them.

GOUR—Hindu herdsmen widely distributed through the province and living on the same cultural and economic level as most of the tribesmen.

GUAR—An elaborate ceremony, generally observed by the Saoras only, a year or two after a death, whereby the soul of the dead is admitted into the company of the ancestors. A buffalo is sacrificed and a menhir is erected.

GURU—Among Hindus a religious preceptor. Among the tribesmen the word is applied to any shaman or medicine man of repute.

GURUMA—Among the Konds and Gadabas, and some other tribes a Guruma is a female shaman, dedicated by what is known as the 'path-marriage' to a spiritual husband.

HANUMAN—The monkey chieftain of the *Ramayana.*

INDAR, INDRA, INDRO, INDARAIKA KITTUNG—Indra is regarded by the Hindus as god of the sky who reigns over the heaven of the gods. He is fond of liquor and his morals are dubious.

ISKINDIA—Probably the Kishkindhya of the *Ramayana.* It was captured by Rama from Bali, the monkey king, and has been identified with part of Mysore.

ISPUR—Possibly a variant of Iswara, a title of Siva. The word is applied (without reference to the Hindu theology) by a number of tribes to the Creator and Supreme Being.

JALKAMNI—A water deity, who is sometimes male and sometimes female.

JAM RAJA, JAMMASUM, JOMMA KITTUNG, JAM DEOTA—The god of death, the Hindu Yama.

JAMPUR—The City of Death.

KALINGA—A stretch of country, to the north of Madras, lying along the Coromandel Coast. We are no more to regard the references to Kalinga Land or other places as geographically precise than we should so regard the lines—

> On the coast of Coromandel.
> Dance they to the tunes of Handel.

KANS—The Raja of Mathura. A very wicked person who, in the Hindu literature, persecuted Krishna, massacred children and was even regarded as an Asura.

KAPANTALI—A character in the Kond stories.

KAPILA—The name Kapila is widely given by the tribesmen and

village Hindus to the first and most sacred of the cows.

KAPPOR CHUA—A sacred grove and spring at Mundlipada, traditional home of the Bondo tribe. It is said to have been visited by Sita who bathed there.

KEWAT—A Hindu caste of fishermen and cultivators.

KIAMOL SAHIB, KIRAMAL SAHIB—Probably John Cambell, who then a Major and later a Major-General, played a large part in suppressing the Meriah human sacrifices among the Konds in the middle of the last century. In a song recorded by Friend-Pereira he is called Kaibon.

KICHAK—In Hindu tradition, Kichak was a soldier who made love to Draupadi and was killed by Bhima. Here used for any kind of undesirable ogre.

KITTUNG—The word is used by the Parengas for 'god' and is known also to some Bondos; it seems to mean 'the sky'. It is by the Saoras, however, that it is most commonly used. In Saora thought, Kittung may be the Supreme Being, or a Kittung may be one of a large number of beings who people the sky and forest. The word seems to be used very much as we use the word 'god'. That is to say, we may use 'god' to refer to the Supreme Creator, but we also use it for a vast number of lesser deities.

KOMMAR, KAMMAR—A widely distributed Hindu caste of metal-workers; in this area the word is usually applied to blacksmiths.

KOMTI—A Hindu merchant caste. The word '*komati*' has been derived from 'gomati', tender of cows.

KULTA—A Hindu agricultural caste of Sambalpur District and neighbourhood. There is a tradition that some of its members accompanied Rama into exile. See Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. III, p. 537.

LABOSUM—The Saora Earth-god.

LAKSHMAN—A friend and half-brother of Rama, who accompanied him into exile.

LOHA DEOTA—The god of iron.

LOHAR—A Hindu blacksmith.

LUARAMARAN—A sub-section of Saoras who work in iron.

MAHADEO—The Great God. One of the names of Siva. The word is applied indiscriminately by the tribesmen to any deity who is married—the wife is then called Parvati—and who interferes amiably in human life. There is little connexion between the rather kindly peasant god of the tribesmen and the terrible Hindu deity.

MAHALAKSHMI—The goddess of good fortune.

MAHAPRABHU—A Sanskrit word meaning 'great master'. The title is used throughout Orissa, and by the tribesmen is generally applied to the Supreme Being, though any lesser deity can be addressed by it. Its use in Orissa has been popularized by the fact that Chaitanya, founder of the Bengal school of Vaishnavite Hinduism, was known as the Mahaprabhu. The mighty Jagannath of Puri is also known as Mahaprabhu.

MALI—A Hindu caste of gardeners. The name is derived from Sanskrit *mala,* a garland.

MANJHI—A headman. The word really means the skipper of a boat.

MANGRAGATTI—A character in the Kond stories. A brother or friend of Paramugatti, often associated with Nirantali in her creative enterprises.

MARIA—A large and important tribe distributed throughout southern and western Bastar. Marias are allied to the Gonds and Koyas, and speak the Gondi language.

MARDI DEO—The god of cholera.

MATA—A mother-goddess, associated generally with smallpox and cholera.

MATIA—A tribe of northern Malkangiri.

MERIAH—The name generally applied to the victims and hence to the human sacrifices of the Konds. It is today applied to the buffalo sacrifices that have taken their place.

MUKMAN SAHIB, MUKMOL—Three officers whose names began with 'Mac' were associated in the middle of the last century with the suppression of the Meriah sacrifices. They were Captains: C. S. Macpherson, Macviccar and A. C. McNeill, all Agents to the Governor-General in the Hill Tracts of Orissa, Mukman or Mukmol may be any one or all of them. In Friend-Pereira's Kond song, Macpherson is called Mokodella.

MUNI—A learned and holy sage.

NANDPUR—The ancient capital of the Jeypore Estate, now regarded as inauspicious for the Maharaja, who never spends a night there.

NIRANTALI—The Creator-goddess of the Konds, probably to be identified with Mother Earth.

ODDE—A Telugu caste of navvies who work at building tanks, quarrying stone, felling timber and digging wells.

PAIK—The word means 'foot-soldier'. The caste is descended from the ancient militia which fought for the Gajapati kings. Among Saoras and Konds the Paiks are rapacious parasites,

servants of the local Patro chieftains, and are held in proper detestation.

PANDAVA, PANDAN—In tribal tradition the word is applied to the five Pandu princes, though many tribesmen would find it hard to give their names.

PANO—See DOM.

PARAMUGATTI—Either the brother or the husband of Nirantali, the Creator-goddess of the Konds.

PARVATI—The wife of Siva. In these stories she appears as the wife of Mahadeo, and is little more than a simple village girl with occasional supernormal powers.

PAT DEOTA—A Pat is properly the spirit of a hill or river, but the word is often used simply as an equivalent to 'god'.

PIJJU-BIBENJ—In Kui, *pijju* means 'rain'. Pijju-Bibenj is the god of water, providing both rain from the sky and water from a spring.

PINNU—The Kui word for 'god'.

POROJA—A word meaning 'subject'. It used to be the custom to speak of the Porojas of Orissa as if they were a special tribe. But the expression has long been recognized as meaningless for ethnographic classification, though its use persists. Jhorias, Gadabas, Pengus, Parengas and Bondos are all tribes which were once regarded as sub-sections of Porojas.

PUS PARAB—A somewhat orgiastic festival held in the month of Pus (Jan.-Feb.).

RAMA, RAMMA—The divine hero of the *Ramayana*.

RANI-ARU—One of the many divine beings who peopled the earth and helped to make it, according to Kond legend.

RAWAN—The demon-king of Ceylon and enemy of the virtuous Rama. In tribal tradition, Rawan may be any enemy of the gods.

RONA—The word means 'battle'. A rather superior caste of descendants of the old militia of the Jeypore Rajas, who wear the sacred thread.

RUMROK—A name for the Supreme Being among the Didayis.

RUSI—The cult hero of the Juangs.

SAPHAGANNA—The traditional home of the Kond race. There may still be seen in the forest, about a mile from the village of Karanja, the rock and the small cave from which the first Konds are said to have emerged. Saphaganna is the scene of important sacrificial ceremonies every three years.

SINGRAJ—A Bondo water-god.

SIMA RANI, SIMADAI—A goddess known to the Saoras and Gadabas, and probably also to other tribes.

SITA, SITABOI, SITIYADAI—Sita, the chaste and virtuous wife of Rama. Used often to denote a goddess of plenty.

SONAR—A Hindu goldsmith.

SUNDI—A Hindu caste of liquor-distillers, widely distributed throughout Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

TALLUR MUTTAI—The Gondi-Koya name for Mother Earth.

TARA PINNU—In Kui *tara* or *tana* means 'land' or earth. Hence Tara Pinnu is Mother Earth; it was to her that the blood-thirsty Meriah sacrifices were formerly offered.

TARKI—The *Ramayana* speaks of a female demon or Rakshashi called Taraka, who lived in a forest on the banks of the Ganges, and devoured many of the inhabitants of the region. Rama and Lakshman fought against her, cutting off her arms and then her nose and ears, until at last Rama killed her with an arrow.

THAKURANI—Properly, another name for Mother Earth. Now commonly associated with the giver of smallpox and cholera.

UYUNGSUM—The Saora Sun-god.

WADDAI—The Gondi word for priest.

WORD LIST

abba —The Saora word for the *Bassia latifolia,* Roxb., the tree which provides the tribesmen with oil, food and ardent spirits.

ala —*Boswellia serrata,* Roxb., a useful tree which grows in the poorest and driest soil. The tribesmen use the fragrant gum-resin as incense in their sacrifices.

amarbel —*Cuscuta reflexa,* Roxb., a parasite with long, golden, thread-like stems, usually found on the wild plum. It is sometimes used as a symbol of close friendship.

bando —The tree, *Baudhinia variegato,* Linn. The large pink and purple flowers are fragrant and much sought after by bees.

bandrung —*Schleichera trijuga,* Willd., a large deciduous tree, commonly found on the banks of streams. Its foliage, which is valued for the shade it gives in the hot weather, is first red, then changes to light and dark green.

bedoni —*Desmostachya bipinnata,* Stapf. a strong coarse perennial grass.

bel —*Aegle marmelos,* Correa. A tree sacred to Siva on account of its aromatic trifoliate leaves. The fruit, which is believed to have come from the milk of Sri, is a remedy for dysentery. The greenish-white flowers are very fragrant and attract large numbers of bees.

ber—*Zizyphus jujuba,* Lam.: The wild plum.

bhua—*Bassia latifolia,* Roxb.

bija—*Pterocarpus marsupium,* Roxb. The Sanskrit *asana* tree. Important for timber. The red gum-resin occurs constantly in legend and story.

bosisum —The Remo word for *Bassia latifolia,* Roxb.

boti —A tree or shrub, a species of *Grewia.*

champa —A tall evergreen tree, *Michelia champaca,* Linn., with yellow, scented flowers.

chapati —A thin flat wheat-cake. The tribesmen make *chapatis* out of several kinds of flour, such as that obtained from the pith of the sago-palm or dried corallae of *Bassia latifolia.*

chaprasi —An official messenger or servant. Chaprasis vary from the splendid beings of the Delhi Secretariat to the down-at-heel drudges of, say, an Excise Inspector. To the tribesmen, however, all are equally august and equally oppressive.

chelik —A boy member of the Muria *ghotul*-dormitory.

dhaman —*Grewia tiliaefolia,* Vahl. The tough elastic wood of this tree is used for bows and for carrying-poles.

dupi —The sacred grass, *Cynodon dactylon,* Pres.

ganja —A preparation of Indian hemp.
gur —Unrefined sugar.

harang —*Shorea robusta,* Gaertn.
harra —The myrabolam tree, *Terminalia chebula,* Retz.

irpi, irpu —The Gond, Kond and Koya words for the *Bassia latifolia* tree.

jamun —The black plum, *Eugenia jambolana,* Lam.
jiwo —The soul. Sometimes used for the 'life-index'.

karanji —*Pongamia glabra,* Vent. A tree, the wood of which is used mainly for fuel. The Saoras usually make their funeral pyres of it.
karela —The bitter vegetable, *Momordica charantia.*
kekar—A small tree, the *Cleistanthus Collinus,* Benth., which bears little brown globose fruits.
kereng —A deciduous shrub, *Calotropis gigantea,* R. Br. Fibres. are extracted from the stem and spun by the Bondos and Gadabas into thread for their characteristic cloth.
koel —The Indian cuckoo.
kosum, kusum —See BANDRUNG.
kumbi —A fairly large deciduous tree, *Careya arborea,* Roxb., which bears clusters of big pink and white flowers.
kura —Often called *dudhi.* A widely distributed tree with soft white wood, *Holarrhena antidysenterica,* Wall. The bark and seeds are used medicinally.

lac —The dark-red resinous incrustation produced on certain trees by the puncture of an insect (*Coccus* or *Carteria lacca*), O.E.D. Gonds, Binjhwars, Kamars and other tribes sometimes cultivate lac, setting it on the *kosum* tree.

mardi —The Gondi or Kui word for the *Terminalia tomentosa,* W. & A.
mahua, mahul —Hindi words for the *Bassia latifolia* tree.
motiari—A girl member of the *ghotul*-dormitory of the Murias.

nendi —The black plum, *Eugenia jambolana,* Lam.

palda —*Butea frondosa,* Roxb. The Flame of the Forest. Rope is spun from its root-fibres, and plates and cups are made from the leaves.
papiha —The Brain-fever bird.

parsa —See PALDA.
phaphan —A wild plum, *Zizyphus jujuba,* Lam. It has small yellow-green flowers.
pio —The Brain-fever bird.
pipal —*Ficus religiosa,* Linn. The sacred fig tree, abode of the Hindu Brahma, the *bodhi* tree of the Buddhists. The slender petiole of the leaves causes them to oscillate in the slightest breeze, a fact which is noticed in several stories.
pitaru —An edible root.

sadhu —A wandering Hindu ascetic.
saja—*Terminalia tomentosa,* W. & A. The sacred tree of the Gonds, traditional abode of their great god, Bara Pen.
sal, sarai, sargi, sargiya —*Shorea robusta,* Gaertn. This splendid tree is one of the most valuable of India's timber trees, used everywhere for building, railway sleepers, and tools. The tribesmen eat the seeds and young leaves, and use the resin as incense.
siari —The camel's foot creeper, *Bauhinia vahlii,* W. & A. The tribesmen use the great leaves of this creeper as plates and for thatching; they make rope from the fibre. The hard woody pods are eaten; they crack open in the sun and shoot out the seeds.
simli, semur—*Bombax malabaricum,* D.C. or *Bombax heptaphyllum,* Cav. The cotton tree, sacred to the Hindus and used in many tribal ceremonies. It is a large tree, easily distinguished by the tall strait stem covered with a light grey bark and unpleasant conical prickles; the flowers are a bright scarlet and very showy.
sisam —The blackwood tree, *Dalbergia latifolia,* Roxb.
suku, sukla —A grass, *Heteropogon contortus,* (L.) Beaux.

tarel —The ebony tree, *Diospyros melanoxylon,* Roxb.
tinsa —*Ougeinia dalbergioides,* Benth. A tree, the ash-grey bark of which exudes a red gum when it is cut.

udan —The Saora word for the mango tree.
wartenu —The Gondi word for *Terminalia tomentosa,* W. & A.

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NOTES[1]

A132.4. GOD TAKES FORM SUCCESSIVELY AS ANTS, SCORPION AND COBRA

This motif, which should be read with A1356.2.—MEANS OF PERSUADING PERSONS TO INTERCOURSE—occurs in a Bhunjia story of the origin of mankind. The first couple, being brother and sister, were reluctant to come together for fear of incest, and Mahadeo had to frighten the girl into her brother's bed, first by changing himself into a swarm of ants, then by attacking her as a scorpion and finally by taking the shape of a cobra. A similar story has been recorded by Dube from the Kamars, who live in the same area as the Bhunjias.[2] In the Kamar story, however, Mahadeo first becomes a tiger, then a snake and then a swarm of ants. In the Bhunjia tale, the girl conceives and bears a son in the usual way after nine months. The Kamar tale includes a popular Gond motif, that the girl begins to bear children almost immediately and produces first 'one, two, three, and then gradually scores, hundreds and thousands of them'.

A1881. THE HORSE AND ITS TABOOS

Although the horse is honoured throughout India, and many tribes regard it with reverence and fill their folk-tales with flying and magic steeds,[3] some of the Orissa tribes look on it with detestation. To the Hill Saoras, the horse is strictly taboo; they may not touch it, or tread on its dung, and they spit when its name is mentioned. There is a story (ch. XX, 47) which is supposed to account for this. In the days before men had organs for excreta, they once ate a heavy meal of horse-flesh, and since they could not void the burden their bellies swelled up and they were in agony, until Kittung sent a rat to burrow a way out. The Gadabas also have a strict taboo on the horse, and if one

[1] Most of the main motifs and subjects in this book are discussed in the introductions to the parallel chapters in *Myths of Middle India*. I add here brief commentaries on various motifs which were not treated there.

[2] Dube, p. 142.

[3] Elwin, *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal*, p. 107.

of them touches it he is excommunicated and has to give a penalty feast.

This sentiment is not confined to Orissa. The Baigas never ride on horseback, for 'in the old days Bhagavan told Nanga Baiga that he and his children were not to plough, nor ride on horses, nor touch horse-dung, nor wear shoes', and they tell of a Baiga who broke this rule and was immediately eaten by a tiger.[1] The Bharias of Bilaspur District also have an aversion to the horse, and will not remove its dung. 'To account for this they tell a story to the effect that in the beginning God gave them a horse to ride and fight upon. But they did not know how to mount it because it was so high. The wisest man among them then proposed to cut notches in the side of the animal by which they could climb up, and they did this. But God when he saw it, was very angry with them.[2]

The Rautia Kols have a rather similar tradition. Bhagavan gave them a horse, but they were not able to mount it, so they took an axe and were about to shorten its legs when it disappeared. A variant of this tradition is that the horse given by Bhagavan had a peculiar power which made it impossible for the Kols to mount it. 'At one moment it would be so small that it would run right out from under the man who was riding it, leaving him standing in the way; on other occasions it became so tall that no one could climb upon it.' Since then the Kols have never used horses, for they believe that they were deceived by Bhagavan.[3]

But there are other Kol stories which resemble those current in Orissa. Shivari, the mother of the tribe, was once going on a journey with a servant to carry her baggage. They found a horse, and Shivari tried to mount it, but it was too big and she took an axe and began to chop at its legs to shorten them. Her servant told her that she was merely spoiling the horse, and gave her his load to hold, saying that he would teach her how to ride. But he jumped on to the horse and rode away, and Shivari had to carry her own baggage, and her Kol descendants became a race of coolies. A similar story describes how a Brahmin was once

[1] Elwin, *The Baiga*, p. 375.
[2] Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. II, p. 250.
[3] Griffiths, p. 35.

ploughing a field, when a Kol passed by on horseback. The Kol had never seen anyone plough before and he dismounted, and presently took the plough in his own hands. The Brahmin then jumped on the horse and rode away, and the Kol has been ploughing ever since. In both cases, the Kols say that it was Bhagavan himself, in the form of the servant and of the Brahmin, who deceived the foolish Kols, and they have never ridden a horse again.[1]

This tale is parallel to one known to every tribe in Orissa, and which is so popular that if you ask anyone for a story he is almost certain to trot out this old bromide. There were two brothers. The elder rode a horse, the younger carried a load. At some point in their journey, they changed places, and the younger brother rode away to become a Raja or landowner, while the elder struggled along under his load and became a coolie or cultivator. This is the basic plot, and it is developed in a score of different ways.

What then is the real motive behind this curious antipathy, so much at variance with the attitude of neighbouring tribes such as the Gonds and Konds, to whom there is no greater honour or pleasure than to possess a horse? It has been suggested that the Gadabas, who used to be palanquin-bearers, regarded the animal as a trade-rival, but this seems to me rather far-fetched. The Saoras constantly make pictures of horses in their ikons, but the horses are always mounts for the gods or ancestors. It may be that the horse is regarded as the proper mount for gods and not for men; it is also the fact that it is used by the superior exploiting classes of landlords, money-lenders and officials, that it is indeed almost a symbol of 'civilization' and so, unpopular. It is interesting that the tribes which have this sentiment are to some extent related—Saoras, Kols, Bharias, Baigas and Gadabas belong to the same group—while the Gond group of tribes living in the same general area have a precisely opposite feeling.

Although the Baigas and Kharias regard the horse-dream as unlucky (Bhuiyas think it lucky), none of these tribes have any idea of the Night Mare.

[1] Griffiths, p. 210.

A2682. ORIGIN OF THE CREEPER, *Cuscuta reflexa,* Roxb.

Chapter IX, 47 gives a Kamar story of how this tribe abandoned the use of the sacred thread. 'When we went to cut bamboo in the forest, the threads used to catch in the branches of shrubs and trees. So one day we held a tribal gathering and decided to give up wearing the threads. We took them off and hung them up all together on a certain tree. We offered sacrifice before them and begged their pardon for abandoning them.' It was soon found that the threads had turned into the pretty yellow parasite, the *amarbel* creeper.

Griffiths gives a similar story as current among the Kols of Madhya Pradesh, though it has a curiously different emotional climate. Originally, the Kols were the highest of all peoples and wore the sacred thread. But one day Bhagavan called men together and put the Kols last, which angered them so greatly that they tore off their sacred threads and scattered them in all directions, whereon they clung to trees and shrubs and turned into the *amarbel* creeper. 'Now' say the Kols, 'we would challenge any Brahmin to do the same. Let them throw away their sacred threads. There was life in ours, but theirs are dead.'[1]

This is an interesting example of how the same motif can be used in two entirely different ways.

B431.1. THE RAT IN TRIBAL FOLKLORE

I have remarked elsewhere on the curious absence of the clever fox or jackal from the Orissa tales. To some extent, its place is taken by the rat. Most of the tribesmen are fond of eating rats; the Baigas distinguish a large number of varieties, and the Bondos catch and fatten them for the Sume-Gelirak Festival when they eat them ceremonially. Grigson describes how the Marias of neighbouring Bastar spend hours digging out field-rats and -mice, carefully wrapping each victim in grass before carrying them home in glee to roast them whole, skewered on bamboo spits, singeing off the fur. 'They sell and buy rat-meat in the markets, either raw, or in little jerked squares on bamboo spits; but that

[1] Griffiths, p. 211.

they are getting sensitive to ridicule on this account is shown by the fact that the buyer must ask for "earth-roots", not rats or mice.'[1]

Although Hindus never, of course, eat rat-meat, they generally regard the rat as a lucky animal, and it is the 'vehicle' of Ganesa, who is known as Akhuratha, 'rat-borne'. In the folk-tales and myths, the rat is almost everywhere introduced as useful or helpful to man. It is an obviously valuable agent in any story which requires a tunnel to be made or something to be gnawed through.

In a Hill Saora tale, the rat takes the place of the Earth Diver (A812), fills its belly with the earth at the bottom of the primeval ocean, and brings it up to the Creator who then spreads it on the water, so making a world.[2] The Jhorias describe how a rat carries salt up from the Under World to the earth,[3] and there is another Hill Saora story of a rat which eats the bones of a virtuous Raja and sinks, at the time of the Deluge, below the earth. The rat burrows up, and passes the bones in its droppings, when they turn into salt.[4]

The rat is very helpful in freeing imprisoned heroes. In a Kuruk story a rat burrows a tunnel by which a boy imprisoned in a pit can escape.[5] In another story recorded from the same tribe, two rats help the hero and heroine by making a road for them wherever they go and always aid them in both joy and sorrow.[6] There is a very old story of the Gond prince, Hirde Shah, who is imprisoned by the Emperor Aurangzeb at Delhi, in a pit or trench. In the Pardhan version,

> Hirde Shah had to sleep on spears, the trench was full of rats.
>
> But Bara Pen was with him; the boy suffered but survived. Bara pen called the rats from the Kajliban forest. They made a hole from the trench into the Emperor's palace. They made a hole into the room of the Emperor's darling daughter. They made a passage all the way from Delhi to Garha-Mandla.

Hirde Shah meets the Princess; she becomes a Gond to please him; they eat pork together, and flee away down the passage, all

[1] Grigson, p. 158. [2] MMI, Ch. I, 27. [3] Ch. I, 38. [4] Ch. I, 43. [5] *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal*, p. 40. [6] Ibid., p. 172.

the long miles to Mandla.[1] In a Baiga version of the same incident, the Gond god Rai Linga himself turns into a rat and makes a tunnel so that the imprisoned prince can gain access to the Emperor's daughter.[2]

In a Jhoria story Ispur punishes a Dom food-hoarder by sending rats to burrow into his secret store and remove the grain.[3]

The burrowing habit of the rat is also used as a motif in stories about the origin of sexual intercourse. According to the Jhorias, in the days when women had no sexual organs, it was a rat who made the first aperture for this purpose.[4] The Bondos have a similar tradition, and say that they eat rat-flesh to gain potency. In a Hill Saora tale, there is an account of how, before men possessed organs of excretion, Kittung put a rat into a man's belly and it burrowed its way out through his backside, so making the first rectum.[5]

Other physical qualities of the rat appear in tales of the *Panchatantra*. In one of these a crow, a rat, a turtle, and a gazelle are close friends. The gazelle is caught in a net and the rat brings other rats and they gnaw through the cords and save it. In another story, an elephant releases rats imprisoned in a pot and they repay his kindness by filling with earth a pit into which he has fallen.

The long tail of the rat is also used by the story-teller. In a Santal tale, a youth buys a cat, an otter, a rat and a snake that were about to be killed. The snake takes him to its parents, who give him a magic ring. After he is married, his wife steals the ring and elopes with a former lover. The youth is imprisoned on a charge of murdering her, but the animals recover the ring after the rat makes the woman sneeze it up by tickling her nose with its tail, and by its means he escapes.[6] There is a similar story in Steel's *Tales of the Punjab*,[7] and yet another recorded by Knowles, where a rat makes an ogress cough up a ring hidden in her stomach by putting its tail in her throat while she is asleep.[8]

[1] Hivale, *The Pardhans*, p. 84.
[2] *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal*, p. 106. Cp. similar tunnelling incidents in Parker, Vol. I, p. 61, 177; Vol. III, p. 326.
[3] Ch. XVIII, 105. [4] MMI, Ch. XII, 36.
[5] Ch. XX, 47. [6] Bodding, p. 88. [7] Steel, p. 185. [8] Knowles, p. 20.

In a Bondo story, there is the interesting motif that it was the rat who first taught men to make fire by friction.[1]

In sharp contrast to these tales of helpful and useful rats are those which regard the rat as an enemy. In a Hill Saora story a rat has an affair with the sister of Kittung the Creator, and she conceives by it. This causes great embarrassment to Kittung who decides to break a fundamental law and marry the girl himself in order to save her reputation.[2] There is also a Bondo tale of a Raja's wife who is seduced by a clever rat by a trick. This is why, says the Bondo narrator, women eat rats with pleasure, for they feel that they are taking revenge for the way they were once deceived.[3]

The Agarias regard the rat as their enemy and 'when we see one we try to kill and eat it'. The origin of this hostility goes back to the legendary war in the course of which the Agaria Iron City Lohripur was destroyed by the five Pandava brothers. The brothers were at first baffled by the strength of the City and the heat of its iron, but Bhimsen caught a rat as big as a hill and sent it to make a tunnel from the sea into the city. When it had done so, the waters rushed in and cooled the iron, and Bhimsen was able to enter the city and take it.[4]

A still more sinister reason for enmity between man and the rat is found in Bondo and Hill Saora traditions. In these the rat appears as an evil adviser. The people have no suitable animal for sacrifice, and the rat comes forward with the suggestion that since they have far too many children the most economical thing would be to sacrifice one of them. The people follow its advice, and then the rat laughs at them. In the Bondo story, the people eat the flesh of the sacrificed child and give some of it to the rat, and when it laughs at them, they kill it in a rage and swear that henceforth they will eat rats and offer them at their festivals.[5] In the Saora version, however, the people do not eat the child's flesh, and the rat itself carries off the corpse.[6] A Parenga tale shows similar distaste; it says that the first rat was made out of an amputated penis, and that rats are as dirty as the thing they

[1] Ch. XVIII, 103. [2] MMI, ch. I, 27. [3] Ch. XVIII, 104. [4] *The Agaria*, p. 86. [5] Ch. XVIII, 103. [6] Ch. XVIII, 107.

came from.[1] A Koya story says that rats are transformed lice which a girl picked from her hair.[2]

B788. BATS KEEP FIREFLIES TO LIGHT THEIR HOUSES

The Kuttia Kond tradition that bats take fireflies to their houses and keep them for light, sometimes feeding their children on them, for 'this is the only light they can bear to see', is illustrated by a similar belief, recorded by Fitzpatrick in Kangra, that 'the weaver bird is accustomed, in the rainy weather, to squeeze the mud out of the bodies of the ordinary earthworm which is highly impregnated with phosphorus, and stick it on the side of his nest to light the inside'.[3]

All the tribesmen are fascinated by fireflies, and in the songs of the Hindi-speaking people of Middle India, a girl's eyes are often compared to them.[4] The Orissa stories show a remarkable variety of beliefs about their origin. A Gadaba tale says that they are the eyes of gods, which survived after a quarrel in which many gods killed each other.[5] A Kamar tradition says that the first firefly was the eye of a youth which was accidentally plucked out by the branch of a tree.[6] The Binjhwars say that Bhagavan sent fire to earth by rubbing it off his own body and putting it on the buttocks of a fly. After the fire had been removed to light hearths for cooking, a little was left and the creature became the first firefly.[7]

A Koya story says that a rich Komti woman was so mean that she once gave burning coals in a dish to a blind beggar woman. When the Komti woman died, she was sent back to earth with fire burning in her backside as a punishment, and so became the first firefly.[8] There is a similar story in northern India. 'The large glow-worm which comes out in the rains is in the Murree hills called the *honwāla kira* because it was in its former life a faqir who refused fire to Behmata or Bidhi Mata, the goddess who

[1] Ch. XVIII, 106. [2] Ch. XXXII, 12. [3] Fitzpatrick, p. 562.
[4] See for example, Elwin *Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh*, p. 43. In a Gond story (MMI. Ch. XI, 9) a witch makes a magic cat and uses fireflies for its eyes.
[5] Ch. XIV, 36. [6] Ch. XIV, 37. [7] Ch. XXX, 2.
[8] Ch. XIV, 38.

records a child's future at birth, and was condemned by her to carry a light for ever. *Hon* is the "light" in the tail.'[1]

D1331.2.7. THE POWER OF DOG'S URINE

The belief that a dog can blind a tiger with its urine, which is found in the Kuttia Kond story in chapter XVIII, 59, appears to be widely distributed in Middle India. Low has recorded it in the Balaghat District of Madhya Pradesh: 'There is a popular belief that when wild dogs attack a tiger they soak their tails in their own urine which is very acrid, and by flicking it in the tiger's eyes they blind it for the moment and so have it at their mercy.'[2]

Griffiths found the same idea among the Kols. Parvati makes a tiger to frighten Mahadeo home, but he picks up some dry pieces of wood and throws them at it. They 'become the wild dogs of the Indian jungle, which do not fear the tiger and attack it in packs. These dogs attacked the tiger and with their tails spread urine in its eyes. This made the tiger blind and fearful, and it hastened away.'[3]

K406.3. DECEPTIONS

Two Didayi stories (ch. XVIII, 14 and 101) contain the following motif. People are preparing for a sacrifice: in one case it is the usual Meriah sacrifice of the Konds, in the other it is a special sacrifice for a sick boy. The correct animal is not available, and so one is stolen. The owner comes to find it, but at the critical moment the stolen animal is transformed into another, and the thieves are saved. In the first story a buffalo has already been killed, and the head, which is lying before the goddess, cannot be hidden; it is changed into a bear. In the second story, a pig is being ceremonially fed preparatory to sacrifice and is turned into a porcupine.

[1] Rose, Vol. I, p. 142.
[2] C. E. Low, *Balaghat District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1907), p. 35.
[3] Griffiths, p. 216.

A similar motif is associated with the origins of the Kumra clan of the Gonds and Pardhans. According to the Pardhan version, the first Kumra stole a goat and sacrificed it to Bara Pen. When the police came to investigate, the Kumra prayed, 'If you are a true god, turn the head of the goat into the head of a pig.' As the police were approaching, the goat's head, which was lying before the god, turned into a pig's.[1] The Gond stories are grimmer. In one, recorded by Trench in Betul, the Kumra Gonds stole a child to sacrifice at the Pen-kara shrine. A certain Kumra did this for a long while, and many children were murdered. At last the villagers caught him, but he hastily threw a basket over the child's dismembered body. He prayed to his god, 'Now save my honour, if not I am a dead man,' and told the people that he had been sacrificing a goat. When they lifted the basket, they found the head and legs of a goat.[2] Another Gond tradition, recorded by Russell and Hira Lal, asserts that the ancestors of the Eti-Kumra clan used to sacrifice Brahmin boys to their gods. Once the parents of a boy caught them, but they prayed to the gods to save them, and the boy was turned into a goat.[3] For this reason, members of the Kumra clan honour the goat as their totem and never eat its flesh.

In every case, it will be noted, the object of sacrifice is stolen, there is a divine intervention, and the object is transformed with the result that the thieves are saved. In the Didayi stories the bear and porcupine come alive, in the Gond stories the goat appears to be dead. There is no idea in the Didayi tale that the bear and porcupine become totems; the stories seem to be told in order to account for their creation.

The hunting section (Pargi-Pardi) of the Bhils of Malwa have the crab as their totem and base the practice on a story which resembles, but differs in one important particular, from those told above. The ancestor of the clan had stolen some meat and was resting by a stream on his way home, when he was accosted by an official. He declared that he had only crabs in his wallet. The official insisted on looking, and there to the Bhil's own astonishment, the meat had been transformed into crabs.[4] In this story

[1] Hivale, *The Pardhans*, p. 32. [2] Trench, Vol. II, p. 43.
[3] Russell and Hira Lal, Vol. III, p. 70. [4] Luard, p. 93.

there is no mention of the meat being brought for sacrifice, no prayer, and apparently no divine intervention.

N456. ENIGMATICAL LAUGH REVEALS SECRET KNOWLEDGE

A Jhoria story (ch. IX, 74) contains the ancient and widespread motif of the enigmatic laugh. A goddess demands from a shaman a sacrifice of goat's flesh on plantain leaves. There are no plantains in the world at this time, and the goddess explains that the shaman will only be able to obtain them if he sacrifices his daughter. She bids him not to be afraid, for as a result his daughter will receive great honour and will live in the houses of Government and great Rajas and wherever there are temples. The shaman goes to his house and rouses his daughter from sleep. 'She immediately understood that her father was going to sacrifice her and she began to laugh. The shaman was frightened but the girl said, "Don't be afraid. Take me quickly".' The shaman kills the girl before the shrine of the goddess and plantain trees grew up from her blood, and ever since they have been loved in temples and palaces.

There is a curious parallel here to the story of the Brahmin Boy and the Golden Image in the *Kathā Sarit Sāgara*.[1] The boy offers himself as a sacrifice to a demon in order to save the life of a King, but as he is about to be killed he laughs loudly and the sacrifice is abandoned, even the demon being so astonished that he no longer desires the offering. According to the rather involved explanation offered by the narrator, the Brahmin boy laughed out of joy and wonder, joy at feeling he had accomplished his object and wonder that all those present could be so deluded by attraction to the perishable and loathsome body. In the Jhoria story too, the suggestion is that the girl laughs because she knows that after her death she will win great honour.

Such mysterious laughs have been fully studied by Penzer[2] and Bloomfield,[3] who give a large number of parallels, and Penzer

[1] Penzer, Vol. VII, 95. [2] Penzer, Vol. I, 46; Vol. VII, pp. 253 ff.
[3] M. Bloomfield, 'Psychic Motifs in Hindu Fiction and the Laugh and Cry Motif', *J. Amer. Orient. Soc.*, Vol. XXXVI (1916), pp. 54 ff.

emphasizes the dramatic value of the curious, enigmatic, mysterious laugh.

S160. MUTILATIONS

The ideal of self-sacrifice, which finds expression in the great historic religions, is by no means absent from tribal ethics. In the myths it often appears in motifs of self-mutilation for the benefit of others.

Self-mutilations may be of several different kinds. The simplest is that which has a practical ascetic motive, like that of enervate Origen. In the *Kathā Sarit Sāgara,* there is a story of a Prince who adopted the life of a wandering hermit. One day, a young woman, captivated by his eyes 'long as the leaf of a lotus', praised their beauty and he tore out one of them and held it in his hand saying, 'Mother, behold this eye, such as it is; take the loathsome mass of flesh and blood, if it pleases you'. At which the narrator exclaims, 'Though our youth be very charming, why should we cling to this perishable body? So we will lay down our bodies to benefit living creatures in this cemetery, the natural home of happiness.'[1] Scores of examples, from all over the world, might be given in illustration, but, this will suffice.

Then there are sacrifices and mutilations to save others from greater harm, of which the *Chanson de Geste* of *Amis et Amiles* is the most famous Western example. This too may be illustrated from the *Kathā Sarit Sāgara.* The Brahmin Viravara, for example, sacrifices his son and cuts off his own head to avert the death of King Sudraka, though the goddess Chandi to whom these supreme offerings are made, restores him and his family to life.[2] Jimutavahana 'that treasure-house of compassion' offers himself to be killed by Garuda in place of Sankhachada. He too is restored to life.[3] And in the same collection of tales, there is one of a Brah-

[1] Penzer, Vol. III, pp. 19 ff.

[2] Ibid., Vol. VI, pp. 191 ff. There is a parallel story, with the same characters, in Vol. IV, pp. 173 ff., but in this a bodiless voice prevents Vira-Vara's self-decapitation at the last moment. Penzer has a valuable note on this subject and points out that all the stories 'point the same moral—the inestimable value of trust, friendship, sacrifice and love'.

[3] Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 153 ff.

min boy who offers himself to save the life of King Chandravaloka.[1] In all these instances, the motive is straightforward and practical; a King is in danger of death, and only the offering of a substitute will save him. In each case the substitute is saved at the last moment, or is restored to life.[2]

Thirdly, it is not uncommon to find, both in popular practice and in literary tradition, instances of self-mutilation by devotees, made as offerings of devotion or in answer to dreams before a god. There is a story current in Chhattisgarh that Krishna, disguised as a Brahmin, appeared before Raja Murtadwaja at Arong in what is now Raipur District, and asked that he would bestow on him one half of his body. 'The pious Raja at once granted his request and, just as he was about to be sawn in two from head to foot, Krishna observed a tear in one of his eyes, and he began to upbraid him, because the tear showed that he regretted having consented to the sacrifice. But the Raja readily replied that the tear only showed the grief of that half of his body which the Brahmin had not asked for. Krishna was so much pleased with this reply that he immediately revealed himself, and conferred his blessing on the devout Raja. Instances still occur of devotees cutting out their tongues or otherwise mutilating themselves in order to make perfect oblations before their deities.

I have not found the idea of ascetic self-mutilation in tribal India, but there are a few tales of such sacrifices as offerings to the gods. When Lohasur first revealed himself to the Agaria hero, Jwala Mukhi, he demanded food, and Jwala Mukhi, despairing of finding sufficient, decided to give half his own body. He took an axe and tried to cut himself in half, but the axe would not cut properly and only one drop of his blood fell to the ground. But the god licked this up and declared himself satisfied.[3] Similarly, a Pardhan story from the same area, describes how Mahadeo visited a virtuous Raja and demanded a measure of raw meat. The Raja thought, 'How can I sin in killing one of my own subjects?' So he cut off his own foot and went to weigh it. It did

[1] Ibid., Vol. VII, pp. 87 ff.
[2] There is a learned note on 'The Self-Sacrificing Child' by E. O. Winstedt in *Folk-Lore*, Vol. LVII (1946), pp. 139 ff.
[3] Elwin, *The Agaria*, p. 103.

not come to a full measure, so he cut off his leg and an arm and gradually his whole body.[1]

Akin to this is the Hill Saora story of the good and generous Raja Gehil, though in his case he did not make offerings to the gods, but mutilated himself for men. 'If anyone wanted meat for dinner and could not get any, the Raja would cut off a bit of his own body and give it to him.' In the end his bones turned into the salt which has been of such incomparable benefit to mankind.[2]

The majority of the tribal legends of this type, however, reverse the conventional motif and show us, not man offering his body to the gods, but the gods mutilating themselves for the advantage of man. In the Hill Saora tradition, Galbesum is regarded in many places as one of the highest, if not the highest, of the gods. In the days before the invention of the plough, Ramma and Bimma wearied of digging with their hands and begged Galbesum to show them some other way of breaking up the earth. The god had nothing to give, so he cut off his left leg and gave it to the brothers and told them to use it as a plough. Afterwards they made a wooden plough on the same pattern.[3]

In other Saora stories we see Kittung lame and maimed in the course of his discovery of fire; Kittung cutting off his hand to make a fig tree; Angaboi, the Moon-goddess, sacrificing herself to prevent Jammasum from tormenting mankind.[4]

The motif is known to many other tribes. The Didayi Rumrok breaks off a tooth and plants it to make a gourd-vine. When he sees how unappetising the first food is, he cuts off the little finger of his left hand to make a turmeric rhyzome.[5]

In an Agaria myth, Nanga Baiga tries to steady the earth, but finds it impossible without nails. He therefore cuts off the little finger of his right hand, and uses it as a nail.[6] In an Ojha story, an unnamed god, not very graciously, cuts off his penis and his wife cuts off her breasts and they give them to a suppliant. From the penis grows a stalk of maize, from the breasts a palm tree.[7]

The Dhanwars describe how the goddess Namakatri Devi

[1] MMI, ch. II, 5. [2] Ch. I, 43. [3] Ch. XXXIII, 15. [4] Ch. IX, 60. [5] Ch. X, 5, 7. [6] *The Agaria*, p. 89. [7] MMI, ch. II, 17.

removes her own liver to make salt for men.[1] There are several Gond stories with the same motif. In one Logundi Raja cuts off his penis, turns it into a cobra and hangs it as a garland round the neck of an honoured guest at a wedding.[2] A god called Chandi also takes off his penis and gives it to a shaman as the first pestle.[3] A goddess pulls out her entrails and gives them to a Gond to make the original adze and ploughshare.[4] The Great Crab of the Under World in a time of drought pulls off one of its own claws, and throws it into the sky to bring down rain.[5]

No doubt these stories of self-mutilation can be interpreted in a very different sense. Yet even if they do point to some obscure nuclear complex or fear of castration latent in the tribal mind, their obvious and manifest meaning is surely that the gods are not incapable, out of sympathy for mankind, of acts of sacrificial love.

S260.1. HUMAN SACRIFICES

The custom of human sacrifice, commonly known as the Meriah sacrifice, practised by the Konds, died out, as a result of stringent measures of suppression, about the middle of the last century, the last public sacrifice in the Ganjam Maliahs being recorded in 1852. The method of sacrifice and the beliefs behind them were described in great detail by the officers responsible for their suppression and have since been often repeated or summarized.[6] For a long time a song recorded by J. E. Friend-Pereira[7] was regarded as proving that the Konds themselves were grateful for this drastic but obviously beneficial alteration of their social life. But time has shown that the Kond belief in the power and even

[1] MMI, ch. V, 6. [2] MMI, ch. XI, 37. [3] MMI, ch. XIII, 7. [4] MMI, ch. XIII, 8. [5] MMI, ch. III, 27.

[6] J. Campbell, *Personal Narrative of Thirteen Years' Service amongst the Wild Tribes of Khondistan* (London, 1864); S. C. Macpherson, *Memorials of Service in India* (London, 1865); A Duff, 'The First Series of Government Measures for the Abolition of Human Sacrifice among the Khonds', *The Calcutta Review* (1845-46), pp. 194-257; G. E. Russell, *Reports of the Disturbances in Purla Kimedy, Vizagapatam and Goomsoor in 1832-36* (Madras, 1856) and *Selections from the Records, Government of India*, No. V: 'Human Sacrifice and Infanticide' (1854). The most convenient general summary will be found in Risley, Vol. I, pp. 404 ff. and in J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*. There is also an excellent account in Thurston, Vol. III, pp. 368-85.

[7] J. E. Friend-Pereira, *J.A.S.B.* (1898).

the necessity of these sacrifices has not disappeared. During the Rampa Rebellion of 1879-80, there were several cases of human sacrifice in the Vizagapatam District. In 1880 two persons were convicted of attempting to offer a Meriah sacrifice near Ambodalla. In 1902 a petition was presented to the District Magistrate of Ganjam begging him to sanction the performance of a human sacrifice.

The custom was by no means confined to the Konds—indeed scores of examples could be given of the practice occuring among the ordinary agricultural communities. Even now few years pass without some case of human sacrifice coming before the courts.

The Konds, however, have made a genuine attempt to adapt themselves to the new order, and this adaptation takes a number of different forms. There is first an attempt to reinforce tribal morale, which was badly shaken when the sacrifices were stopped, by stories and traditions about the Meriah. Secondly, a body of myths, examples of which are given in chapter XXVII, has been created which is calculated to cure a two-fold guilt complex: some of the myths aim at clearing the Konds of the guilt of instituting such sacrifices by showing that they had to be offered under the urgent demands of the gods; others aim equally at clearing the Konds of the guilt of stopping the sacrifices by showing that they had to be stopped under the orders of Government. In either case it was not the Konds who were at fault.

Thirdly, there are various substitutory practices designed to satisfy the angry gods—ancient relics are preserved and worshipped; masks are substituted for human skulls and buffaloes for the actual victims; wooden pillars are erected on the pattern of those originally used to support the human victim; a festival, which is still called the Meriah Festival, is celebrated every few years. Lastly, under the impulse of tragedy, dreams or the inspirations of the shamans, actual sacrifices are still sometimes secretly performed.

T958. MOTIFS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PLACENTA

Throughout the world pre-literate peoples regard the afterbirth with awe and reverence.[1] Its intimate connexion with the

[1] There is a full account of the placenta in folk-lore in Ploss and Bartels, *Woman* (London, 1933), Vol. II, pp. 779 ff.

child, its association with blood, its retention in the body after the birth, the mysterious knotted cord by which it is attached to the baby's body, have caused it to be regarded as itself something that is partly alive or that has at least the potency of life within it. It has sometimes been regarded as the child's twin, often as the seat of the external soul.

In our myths the placenta is regarded sometimes as the cause of menstruation, sometimes as the origin of conception. For example a Saora story describes how Kittung put a lotus flower on the head of Ramma's daughter; it became the placenta and she began to menstruate.[1] A Gond tale tells how a Baiga shaman picks a mushroom and gives it to his barren wife; she eats it raw and it becomes a placenta within her and she at once conceives.[2]

This magic power means that it is very important that the after-birth should be neutralized and made harmless. For not only may it be used by a witch if she can get possession of it,[3] but there is, as we shall see, some sort of energy inherent in it. All the tribes, therefore, pay considerable attention to its disposal. Hill Saoras, Konds and Murias bury it behind the house, and place a slab over the pit and drive into the ground above the arrow with which the umbilical cord is usually severed. The Murias wrap the placenta in leaves and put it in the pit, then make a small shelter of branches round it. Over the pit they place a stone or wooden seat and the mother sits on this for her daily bath until the stump of the cord dries up and falls from the baby's body. This too is then thrown into the pit and it is filled in, the arrow being driven into the ground above it. The Pardhans and many other tribes bury the placenta and cord inside the house near the place of birth, and light a special fire above it.[4]

The mysterious power of the placenta is illustrated in many tales. In a Hill Saora story, marigolds grow from a placenta buried behind a house and are offered to the gods.[5] In a Parenga story, a child is born in the forest; the mother throws placenta and cord on the ground and a bamboo grows from them.[6] In another tale recorded from the same tribe, a crow carries off the placenta and cord, drops it in the jungle and there springs up

[1] Ch. XXI, 13. [2] MMI, p. 294. [3] Cp. Fuchs, p. 106. [4] Hivale, p. 164. [5] Ch. IX, 7. [6] Ch. IX, 38.

the first bamboo.[1] The Koyas tell how a tobacco plant sprung from a placenta-pit,[2] the Hill Saoras how a placenta was transformed into a banyan tree,[3] the Jhorias how twin illegitimate children were abandoned in the forest, and how a palm tree grew up from their placenta and fed them with its juice.[4] The Murias have a story of seven girl babies who were born with one placenta between them. It was buried, and the mother allowed her milk to fall into the pit, from which presently grew up a palm.[5]

Children are actually born from the placenta. A Bondo myth describes how an old Gadaba couple have a child. They bury the after-birth under a stone. Presently from the placenta and cord a boy and girl are born, and live there for six months licking the stone; they are the first Bondos.[6] This motif occurs, more picturesquely, in what are properly called folk-tales. There is a Kuruk tale in which the youngest of seven Ranis gives birth to a child. The six elder women throw him with the after-birth into a lake. The placenta floats to the bank and from this 'flower' grows a beautiful flower, and the baby rises miraculously from the water and sits upon it.[7] And there is a Baiga folk-tale in which, from the placenta of a girl who has been sacrificed to a tank, there grows a flower, and from the flower a baby-boy.[8]

The constant association with trees in these stories will be noted. In various parts of the world, it has been the custom for people to bury the after-birth under trees, or to place it in their branches. In the Orissa stories, the after-birth is frequently left under a tree, when the mother has been delivered in the forest. Risley recorded a tradition of the Koras, to which I will return later, in which a placenta is described as being wrapped in sal leaves and hanging from the branch of a *barda* tree.[9]

This leads us to the possible connexion of the placenta with totemism. 'If the placenta', says Hutton, 'be regarded as the location of the external soul, a possible origin of totemic belief at once suggests itself in the possibility of the placenta being devoured by some scavenging animal or bird, or being associated

[1] Ch. IX, 39. [2] Ch. XI, 6. [3] Ch. XII, 25. [4] Ch. XII, 11. [5] Ch. XII, 22. [6] *Bondo Highlander*, p. 2. [7] *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal*, p. 388. [8] Ibid., p. 447. [9] Risley, Vol. I, p. 507.

with the tree on which it was placed for security or with some plant which springs up on the spot where it is buried.'[1] The Barda clan of the Koras, which regards the fruit of the *barda* tree as taboo, traces the origin of the custom to the day when one of their ancestors went out hunting with his two brothers but found no game. While they were wandering about, they noticed a bundle wrapped in *sal* leaves hanging from the branch of a *barda* or *pithali* tree. The bundle contained meat, which, being very hungry, they cooked and ate without further inquiry. Afterwards they found that what they had eaten was a human placenta. The Alu section of the same tribe believe that their first ancestor was born under a *phal-alu* tree, and for this reason they will not eat any of the bulb-like fruit of this tree, or any bulbs, such as potatoes, which bear a resemblance to it.[2] It is at least possible that in this case, as in all cases where totems are derived from birth-incidents under certain trees, the real point is that the placenta was abandoned or buried in the place of birth.

The origin of a sub-clan of Pardhans, the Jamati Potta, is associated with the placenta, though it is not clear how far it has affected their totemism. As in the Kora story just quoted, the ancestor of this group went hunting but failed to find any game. He was returning home hungry and dejected when he saw something on the ground that looked like a bit of meat. He picked it up, cooked it on the spot and ate it. Later he discovered that the meat was actually the placenta of his own child, whom his wife had delivered in the forest that very day. When the man's deed was known the other members of the Potta clan outcaste him and he became the first of the Jamati Pottas.[3]

The Agarias also have a Potta clan and this too is associated with the placenta, but the story is entirely different. In this an Agaria is escaping from some Gonds who want to kill him. He takes refuge in a friendly Gond's house, and the goodwife kills a goat, covers his body with the blood, makes him lie down beside her and puts the goat's stomach in a winnowing-fan near by. When the pursuers arrive, she tells them that she has just given birth to a monster, and points to its placenta lying in the

[1] Hutton, *Caste in India*, p. 255. [2] Risley, Vol. I, p. 507. [3] Hivale, p. 49.

fan. The Gonds are so frightened that they run away. In this case, the story has given rise to some sort of totemism, for the Agaria Pottas, though they eat the flesh of the goat, never take its stomach. They offer it to their god Lohasur and bury it in a hole in the ground inside the house just as if it was the placenta of a child.[1] The Pardhans have a variant of this story, but in this case it is a Parteti who is escaping, and the woman has just borne a real child. She smears the fugitive with its blood and shows the pursuers the real placenta, which so amuses them that they burst out laughing and go away.[2]

[1] *The Agaria,* p. 77. [2] Hivale, p. 37.

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